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MEMOIR

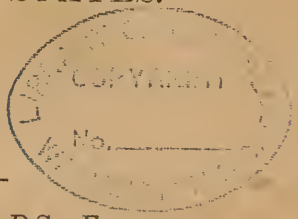
OF

ALEXANDER MACOMB,

THE MAJOR GENERAL

COMMANDING THE

ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES.



BY GEORGE H. RICHARDS, Esq.
Captain of Macomb's Artillery, in the late War.

NEW-YORK—M'ELRATH, BANGS & Co.

MDCCCXXXIII.

No. 2

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1400

W. Osborn and Co., Printers,
85 Chatham-street.

New-York, November, 1832.

TO ALBERT GALLATIN:

Sir,

Will you allow me to inscribe this little volume to you, as an humble tribute of my respect and admiration, of my gratitude and esteem? You being now in private life, I feel the greater freedom in the expression of my sentiments, and may, I trust, indulge this expression, without an impugnment of motive.

Although you are a civilian, there can be no incongruity in dedicating this military memoir to him, from whose intellectual grasp no branch of human art or science is permitted to escape. You may feel, too, a special interest in tracing the course of a soldier, whose most signal exploit facilitated your own negotiations in the Treaty of Ghent.

A Financier, Diplomatist, and Statesman, whose mind, acquirements, and character, (it is within my personal knowledge) are known and reverenced in the political and scientific circles of Europe, and whose republican principles and public services have been em-

phatically avouched by one of our political Patriarchs, Jefferson, in that pregnant phrase—"*he is the main-mast of the vessel of State*"—you may yet condescend at some leisure moment, during the intervals of your important avocations, to run over these sketches. It has not been within the vanity, any more than the ability of the writer, to emulate your own peculiar style of thought and of expression, which, like a steam engine, accumulates a momentous power by compression, and exerts it with a corresponding expansive effect—a resistless energy of propulsion: Still these pages, though they can afford you no instruction, will present you, *in the subject of them*, with a theme of national pride and a source of patriotic gratulation.

GEORGE H. RICHARDS.

PREFACE.

The following pages were prepared some two or three years ago, for Samuel F. Bradford, Esq., to be inserted in his Annual "the Cabinet," which was published in conjunction with the Talisman. The memoir being too long for publication in that work, and the task of abbreviation being irksome, a personal friend of Gen. Macomb, in my absence, kindly undertook the office of re-casting it in his own mould, and produced it with great grace, spirit, and elegance, as it appeared in the "Cabinet." This was satisfactory to me; but many of the friends and connexions of the General, in this city, having been desirous that it should appear in full, as originally written, I have yielded, however indiscreetly, to their request.

It is now, therefore, submitted to the Press, as a memorandum for the historian—as a grateful reminiscence for the personal friends of the subject of the memoir—and as an humble, but honest record for those who love their country and that country's glory and all who have achieved it—for those who, more of patriots than critics, will excuse the imperfect delineation, while they contemplate the features, and cheeringly hail the brilliant career, of virtue and valour, of learning and genius.

It is needless to say that these sheets, from a rough soldier's rougher pen, advance no pretensions to the no-

tice of criticism. It were idle to deprecate evils which can not come. "Who would rack a fly upon the wheel?"

The reader, it is hoped, will deem me excusable in having sprinkled this memoir with brief notices of those actors in the scenes described, whom the narrative naturally and necessarily introduced.

The delay which has taken place in the publication, occasioned by the pressure of my engagements, has not, of course, affected, in any degree, the verity of its statements. Truth is the same, at Athens and at Rome, now and forever; and the truths, especially, of History, like Pyramidal Structures, tower through all time, and solidify by the accumulation of ages. They stand, mid the revolutions of human affairs, like fixed points in the heavens, toward which philosophers and statesmen point their instruments of observation, and gather calculations for the expansion of science and for the conduct of nations.

It is not the design nor the wish of this memoir to elevate the glory of arms above that of letters. There are different species of fame, and different species even of military fame. True glory is in a compound ratio to the exertion of intellectual power, and to the direction which that power may take. Aside from its motives and objects, whatever evinces the greatest power of intellect is the most glorious; whether an epic poem or the higher calculus. Whether, with Milton, to create and people immaterial worlds—or, with Shakspeare, to thread the mazes of all possible modes of being and of action, of feeling and of thought—whether, with Newton, to weigh the stars, to analyze the light, and pierce the material curtain which shuts us out from other spheres—or,

with Berkeley, looking through nature, to remove from before the mental vision the barrier which divides time from eternity: these, one and all, are glorious, immortal conquests. They lift up human nature. They teach man, that, though bodily present in this world, he has capacities for higher scenes, superior enjoyments—the destined heir of a richer and eternal heritage.

The victories of Cæsar are preserved imperishably in his own commentaries. The triumphal arch, the aspiring column, the memorial statue, have mouldered into dust, while his descriptions are fresh and verdant as when first from the hand of their author. As the second orator of Rome, he was undoubtedly more glorious, than when, at the head of his flushed legions, he passed the rubicon, and gave a master to the mistress of the world. The modern Cæsar, too, has erected, on the Code Napoleon, the proudest pillar of his fame, more durable than the bronze or marble of the Tuilleries, and which will survive the names of Lodi, Austerlitz, and Marengo. These instances but serve to illustrate the position, that the accomplished officer, the great general, those whom History inscribes on her scroll, and who were not born to die, must add, to the rich endowments of nature, the maturest cultivations of art.

In the ages of barbarism, war was a royal pastime—the vagrant hunting game of Princes for spoil and dominion. Scythia's desolating hordes, the ignorant movements of vast masses of physical force, of the wire-strung automata of armies, for the purposes of violence and devastation, of lust, rapine, and insatiate ambition, long drenched the earth with blood and tears, and rent the sky with cries of anguish. We behold Bajazet in the

cage of Timur, and consider prisoner and gaoler alike the object of disgust and horror, of scorn and execration. Goth and Hun, Alaric and Attila, sweep, with their besom, the land of Italy and Greece, of arts and of humanity; Kouli and Gengis Khan pour like a torrent upon Candahar and Cathany; Bethlem Gabor, with vulture talons, pounces upon Hungary;—the only memorials they leave are ruins—their only trophies are rights violated and innocence profaned, the confiscated palace and the desecrated temple, cities sacked and provinces depopulated: They are immortalized in infamy: Their march is the march of death—all the Furies in their train. The nineteenth century, in the spirit of true philosophy, looks down, pity softening its contempt, upon these ignoble banditti, the royal robbers and princely murderers of mankind.

Behold now, in contrast wide as zenith from the nadir, the Genius of Modern War—discarding all barbarities—retaining all refinements—cherishing all the courtesies—displaying lofty sentiment and gallant action, the Chivalry of Heroism. Examine the character, the objects, the motives of the PATRIOT SOLDIER. No mercenary he! No despot's minion! Looking to his country, to posterity, to preserve his name, he plunges, like Curtius, a voluntary victim, into the gulf which Anarchy may have opened—he offers himself up, in defence against foreign aggression, a self-sacrifice on the altar of his country. Take a generous youth, of noble aspirations, his breast panting at the bright prospects which Hope and Imagination present to him in burnished array, his mind fraught with full knowledge of all the avenues which lead to the Temple of Fame. Which path will he

pursue? What course select?—How the blood thrills to the heart, when we contemplate Gustavus issuing from the mines of Dalecarlia to the rescue of his countrymen—when we barely pronounce the names of Bruce and Wallace—when we recall the image of Pulaski—when we hear the child lisp the household word Lafayette—when we see, in the picture of the mind, Kosciusko unfurling the banners of Independence from the walls of Warsaw! Look at the General, in the tented council, explaining to his confidential officers the plan of the campaign, on the issue of which the existence of his country, of liberty, and its institutions, is suspended! Again see him in the field, quickly arranging the scientific combinations of battle, cheering the wavering, and leading the brave! Search the annals of States—go to the Pantheon of the Deified—find him who wears the greenest chaplet, and holds the highest niche in the Temple: His name will be Washington, who lead the armies of his country to victory, and conquered for Freedom and the Republic! The protection of hearths and altars, the repulsion of invasion, the overthrow of despotism, the establishment of independence, the salvation of a country, which are the proper feats of arms, have ever ranked, not only among the dearest duties of patriotism, but also among the sublimest objects of man's ambition and glory.

In modern times, war has not merely grown into an art—it is ennobled into a science: and, from its ultimate perfection, perhaps, as well as from the prophecies both of religion and philosophy, Philanthropy may indulge the hope of that Saturnian period, "when nations shall learn war no more." Till this period come, and indeed in order to hasten it, we must neglect no instruction—we must

use all appliances. We must cherish the science of war; and, as war itself is not an abstraction, we must also cherish those who can practice it.

Preparation for it is proverbially its best preventive; and it is too tremendous in its trials to be wantonly incurred by negligence: for war, like Minos, shakes the Urn which holds the fates of men and nations. Every country hitherto has been necessitated or seduced to launch into the tempestuous waters of martial combat; but when embarked on that ocean, not sage nor seer can tell what storms may gather, in what clouds the beacon-lights be lost, what hidden currents heave us from our course, what time the arch again be spanned, or which belligerent be doomed to cry, in the language of Byron, "Renew thy rainbow, God!"

GEORGE H. RICHARDS.

MEMOIR, &c.

In our national gallery of distinguished men, the portrait of Alexander Macomb stands conspicuous. The great men of this country, like the oaks of its forests, are of spontaneous growth. The hot-house of patronage, the adscititious aids of noble family and illustrious alliance, are not necessary to bring them to maturity. They invigorate and expand, as well amid the storms, as beneath the sunshine, of fortune.

The subject of this Memoir will be found, like most of his eminent countrymen, to have risen by the salient and recuperative energies of his own genius. Although born of respectable parents, and receiving, not an elaborate and finished, though highly valuable education, still he must be viewed as the architect of his own fortunes, the arbiter of his own destiny. How many, even in our own country, have enjoyed greater advantages, had more powerful connexions, been educated at universities, and perfected in their studies by foreign travel, who

yet have performed no deed of fame, and rendered no service to society. The prominence of station, the wide spread and enduring celebrity, which Macomb has acquired, have been fairly earned in the open field of honourable competition and emulous prowess. He sowed the harvest which he reaps. By his own right arm, he plucked the laurels, with which a nation garlands his brow, and which, in peace, like Harmodius, he weaves into a wreath where his sword reposes. Such a man seems always favoured by good fortune, because he wins it by address, or commands it by boldness.

It is usual, in sketches like the present, to give some account of the origin and family of the individual whose life and character are portrayed. Although, in this free and happy republic, no long line of patrician ancestry is deemed a qualification for office, nor a passport to power; yet it is a theme, at once, of ingenious speculation and liberal curiosity, to trace, through the derivation from different nations, the various sources of the blood which runs in the veins of our countrymen, and, in every instance of a distinguished person, to learn something of his parentage and descent.

Alexander Macomb, the Major General commanding the Army of the United States, is descended, on the paternal side, from a respectable Irish family, and, on the maternal, from an ancient French family of noble

extraction. The grandfather, John Macomb, emigrated to this country, from Ireland, as early as the year 1742, and held an official station under the Colonial government. He selected, for his place of residence, the city of New-York. Here, too, his son Alexander Macomb, the father of the General, was educated and resided. He sustained the character of an useful and highly public-spirited citizen ; had the honour of representing that city in the Legislature of the State in the years 1787–88; and, in the late war with Great Britain, furnished five sons for the service of his country in the regular Army and the Militia.

The grandfather, on the mother's side, was Robert de Navarre. He came from Paris to America, in the year 1745, an officer under the French government, and acted as Notaire Royal and Sub-Delegué of the king of France, on the early establishment of Detroit, where he remained and raised a large family, the descendants of which are spread through the greater portion of the French population of Michigan, and its immediate vicinity on the Canadian side.

The father of our Macomb, in the adventurous spirit of the times before the revolution, established a mercantile house at Detroit, where he succeeded in amassing a considerable estate, by means of those valuable furs and peltries, then and since the rich staples of an extensive

commerce in the remote and unsettled parts of the northwestern portion of America, bordering on the Ohio and the Lakes. He married, at Detroit, Miss Catharine Navarre. He had a numerous and growing family; and, on the restoration of peace, with the acquisition of a handsome fortune, he returned to New-York. He made extensive purchases of land in the western part of the State, then a wilderness, now called "Macomb's Purchase," and enjoyed the advantages of his industry and enterprise, until misplaced confidence and the vicissitudes of trade snatched from him, as it were in a moment, the accumulations of years, and reduced him to comparative indigence and distress.

The subject of this memoir was born at Detroit, on the 3d of April, 1782. Though not, like one of the heroes of antiquity, born on tapestry representing the scenes of the Iliad, he may yet almost literally be said to have been nursed in field and fortress, and rocked by the storms of war. Detroit, at this time, was a military post. The chubby boy became a favourite with the soldiers of the garrison. He was dandled on the soldier's knee, —fed at the soldier's mess—his eye was dazzled with the gorgeous pageantry of military parade—and his ear delighted with the rousing strains of martial music. He slept and awoke amid martial sounds and associations. External objects so readily and deeply stamp

their impression on the mind just opening to the world, it is not a matter of surprise that the dreams of his infancy and the visions of his youth were of military glory.

He was yet an infant, when his father took up his residence in the city of New-York. It was in that city, he spent the early years of childhood. But when only eight years of age, he was sent to the Academy at Newark, in New-Jersey, and was placed under the charge of the Rev. Doctor Uzual Ogden, who was president of the institution, pastor of the Episcopal church in that town, and bishop elect of the Diocese of New-Jersey. He there received the rudiments of a classical, mathematical, and French education. The eruption of the French revolution, at this period, threw many of the unfortunate families of France and the West Indies into our country, as an asylum where the exiles of foreign oppression sought and found a second home. A great many of the young gentlemen of those families were sent to the Academy at Newark; and a number of the families themselves took up their residence in the vicinity. This circumstance afforded a fine opportunity to the American youths, by cultivating intercourse with the French, to acquire a practical knowledge of their language. The occasion was not neglected by young Macomb, who, both at school and in conversation, became familiarized with that polite and use-

ful tongue: an acquisition which has proved itself of immense benefit to him, in his intercourse with the world, and especially in the prosecution of his military profession.

It is hardly less philosophical than amusing, to trace the developments of greatness to their germ; to mark even the earliest indications of character; and notice those little incidents which often, perhaps, have a controlling, though unsuspected, agency in forming the plastic mind of youth, that, subsequently, in the maturity of its strength and in the vigour of manhood, may guide the course, or mould the destinies, of empire. With this view, the reader will pardon a brief recital of a passage or two, in the juvenile years of Macomb.

The war of the French revolution raging at the period he was at school in Newark, although a mere lad, he could not but be influenced, more or less, like "young Norval who had heard of battles," by the descriptions of the martial array, of defeats and victories alternately lost and won by the aristocrats and democrats of France. These were, at that time, the constant topic of conversation and newspaper discussion. At the commencement of that revolution, it is well known with what fervid enthusiasm the feelings of our countrymen, even to the children, entered into the contest, then deemed the holy cause of freedom, (as

indeed it was in its incipiency,) against oppression and despotism! Every success which the French republicans gained was lauded throughout the country—the public prints related it with exultation—and the American people hailed it with rapturous joy, identifying the cause of France with that of universal liberty. The "Marcellois hymn" and other patriotic songs of that revolution were "conn'd by heart" by our youths, and recited and sung with an ardour bordering on phrenzy. The French cockade was universally worn; indeed it was dangerous to appear without that emblem of "civism" and democracy; even the cravats were tamboured with the motto of "La liberté et L'Egalité," and the appropriate tricolour of the day.

During this period too, strong excitement prevailed against the British Government, on account of its withholding the posts within our acknowledged limits, on the Canadian frontiers, and its impressment of our citizens on the high seas. The approach of war with Great Britain was now considered to be so near, that the citizens commenced the fortification of Governor's Island, and other positions in the vicinity, for the protection of the city of New-York; and the very boys at school joined in the welcome task of throwing up the projected works. Small as he then was, our young enthusiast partook of the fatigue, and was distinguished

for his assiduity in lending his little labors to the work of defence.

The students at the Academy in Newark had become quite numerous; and some of them having given umbrage to a young son of Crispin, *the faculty*, feeling their "esprit du corps" touched, roused themselves to the field, with their allies, and appeared *en masse* before the students. The challenge could not be declined; and a combat ensued, in which, after a severe struggle with fists, sticks, "arma furor mininstrat"—the Crispians retreated. In this affair, by that sort of instinctive impulse and consent, which, in assemblies, whether of boys or men, assumes and yields the ascendant, young Macomb took and vigorously exercised the command. In a subsequent affray between the same parties, a similar illustration was afforded. It was agreed that each party should select its champion, and decide the contest according to the laws of pugilism, then a fashionable accomplishment. Young Macomb, about thirteen years of age, entered the ring on the side of the students. The brawny arms of his antagonist played with athletic strength about his person, and would inevitably have gained the day, had not fortunately our little champion been schooled in the pugilistic art by a brother-in-law, who had himself been regularly initiated by Mendoza, in

England. The ensuing winter furnished new occasions for these miniature military operations. The students agreed to erect a fort of snow, and to divide themselves into two parties, one of which to garrison the fort, and the other to attack it. The Latin and Greek Teacher at the Academy was a Scotchman of the name of Irquart, who possessed deep-rooted prejudices against the French, and, finding that they were not so enthusiastically admired as formerly by the Americans, sought to create animosities among the students, who were pretty equally divided in point of number. The fort being completed, these little communities, as representatives of their respective nations, determined to toss up for the possession of the fort, and each choose a commander. The French won; and a day was fixed on, for the siege and attack. The French boys secretly repaired to the fort the previous night, with frozen snow-balls, and arranged them in their magazines, and along the parapets. At dawn of the appointed day, the parties were at their respective stations, Macomb heading the Americans. The besieging party, before commencing the attack, threw up, under the fire of the fort, a sort of epaulment, to cover themselves from the balls of the besieged. The Scotch schoolmaster happened that day to get into the Academy at an earlier hour than usual, and watched, with intense eagerness, the

operations of the belligerents, which were going on at no great distance from his position. The assailants having prepared a sufficient quantity of munitions for the bombardment, the fire was opened on the fort, and returned with great spirit and effect, several of the besieging party having been struck with the ice-balls, and brought to the ground. The Americans conceived the use of this missile to be contrary to the laws of war; and their leader instantly proposed to assault the fort, and carry it by storm. This proposal was hailed with three cheers, and almost as immediately executed. Under a tremendous and well-directed fire of the ice-balls, the works were stormed, the magazines seized, and the arms turned against the French. The Scotchman now caused the bell to be rung for school; and, after severely upbraiding the besieged party for their treachery, he applied his leathern throng to their leader, calling him the *domned French mon*, until our hero, by his intercession, procured his release, and let him go on parole.

In the year 1795, Macomb's eldest sister was married to the Honorable Robert Kennedy, a younger son of the late Earl of Casselis, and brother of the present Marquess of Ails, who, possessing a handsome property near Newark, took up his residence at a neighboring seat, called Petersboro, on the Passaic, and invited to his

house, his new brother-in-law, for whom he felt a strong partiality, in order that his manners and education might be more carefully attended to, while at the same time he might continue his studies at the Newark Academy. Mr. Kennedy had just become of age ; and, in possession of an ample fortune, entertained all the agreeable and enlightened society in his neighbourhood. He frequently, also, had distinguished individuals of our own country and from abroad, to pass the more pleasant seasons at his hospitable mansion. Besides, he was fond of hunting, shooting, and fishing, and all the sports of the field—exercises well calculated to fit one for the active duties of a soldier, and of which young Macomb was permitted to partake, when they would not interfere with his studies.

The intelligent and refined society which frequented Petersboro, as well as that of Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy themselves, who were both highly accomplished, presenting in their own deportment good examples of polite life, afforded to young Macomb an early opportunity of forming his manners on the best models ; and it is but justice to those who then constituted the society of that place and its vicinity, to say that they possessed, in an eminent degree, all those acquirements and *agremens* which, while they soften the manners, tend to meliorate the heart and polish the mind, and conse-

quently to give a zest to friendly intercourse, and guard the purity of social enjoyment.

Having now attained the age of fourteen, and manifesting a decided predilection for a military life, he intimated to his father a desire to enter either the Army or Navy, for some of his young associates had just been appointed Midshipmen. His father, justly regarding a good education paramount to every other consideration, replied, that when he had completed his studies and evinced competent ability, he might think of a profession ; but that, if he were to launch into the world with a mind uninformed and undisciplined, his course of instruction unfinished, it would be idle to expect the attainment of eminence in any pursuit.

Our difficulties with France continued to increase, and volunteer corps in defence of the country began, in the spirit of the day, to be raised and organized. Notwithstanding the youth and careful tutorage of Macomb, his propensity for a military life exhibited itself so strongly, that his father thought it a duty to take him home, in order to confine his attention more exclusively to his books. His father now caused him to be particularly instructed in mathematics and drawing, and engaged masters to perfect him in the arts of fencing and riding. By being trained to athletic and gymnastic exercises in his youth, the foundation was

laid for a hale, robust constitution, which he has ever since uniformly enjoyed.

On the 28th of May, 1798, Macomb was proposed and elected a member of the volunteer company, called the "New-York Rangers," under Lieut. Commandant Edward Laight, in the 3d Regiment of New-York Militia, of which Jacob Morton, now Senior Major General of the Militia of the State, was Colonel. This company was exclusively composed of the young gentlemen of the city; and a single black ball denied admission. Our Government was then engaged in making preparations to meet any exigencies which might grow out of the difficulties unhappily existing between the United States and the French Republic. It was at this time, that our Commissioners in France, on a demand by the Government of that country for money, recommended to Congress the high-souled resolve, "*Millions for defence—not a cent for tribute.*" On the day that Macomb became a volunteer in defence of his injured country, an act was passed by Congress, authorizing the President to accept volunteers. The company to which he belonged, fired with a patriotic spirit, unanimously offered their services to the President, and were accepted accordingly. An act was soon afterwards passed, to augment the Army by twelve new Regiments of Infantry and six Troops of Light Dragoons.

These troops, together with the two troops of Dragoons already in service, were to be formed into a Regiment. The opportunity thus presented itself for those who desired it, to enter the Army ; and young Macomb, without the knowledge of his family, availed himself of the opening, by tendering his services to the Secretary of War.

He requested an appointment in any Regiment or Corps about to be raised, but asked, in the event of his success, if admissible, to be placed in some Regiment to be raised in his own State. His letter of application he handed, open, to the Colonel of his Regiment, Jacob Morton, with a request that he would be pleased to add whatever he thought proper, and forward it to the Hon. John Lawrence, the then Senator from the State of New-York, to be laid before the Secretary of War. Colonel Morton had served in the regular Army during the Revolution, and possessed a real military tact and spirit. He gave great encouragement to the volunteers who composed his elegant Regiment. This Regiment attracted a marked notice by its high state of discipline and soldierly appearance : no regular soldiers could have been more carefully drilled. It was composed of the elite of the city ; and a number of its members were appointed in the Army and Navy.

The preparations for war with France were now

urged with more and more activity. General Washington was invited to the chief command of the forces. The other General officers were also named. They assembled at the seat of Government to make preliminary arrangements for the defence of the country, to organize the army, and select, from the numerous applicants, the officers to be appointed from the several States. General Hamilton, who was personally acquainted with young Macomb, and had discovered the early presages of his future eminence, with his usual insight into character, recommended him to the President for the appointment of Cornet, with the remark that he was "young, active, and ambitious." His name was accordingly submitted to the Senate, on the 31st of December, 1798. He was confirmed as a Cornet of Light Dragoons, and commissioned to take rank on the 10th of January, 1799, whence he dates his military service in the Army of the United States.

The Army at this time, as actually raised, consisted of four Regiments of Infantry, and two troops of Dragoons, destined for the protection of our inland frontiers, and stationed in the Indian country; and of two Regiments of Artillerists and Engineers, forming the garrisons of our maritime frontier and the principal forts on the Lakes.

Although General Washington was appointed Com-

mander in Chief, the active command of the whole Army was devolved by him on Major General Alexander Hamilton, who was next in rank to Washington. The whole force, notwithstanding, was divided into separate commands under the several Generals. The troops north of the Potomac were the designated command of General Hamilton; those south of that river, of Major General Charles Cotsworth Pinckney; and those west of the mountains, being the old troops, of Brig. General James Wilkinson. Brig. General William North was appointed Adjutant General, and stationed in New-York, near the Head Quarters of General Hamilton. In the organization of the Staff, young Macomb, although now scarce seventeen years of age, was appointed an Assistant Adjutant General, and attached to General North.

By this fortunate circumstance, was probably laid the foundation of that familiar and accurate knowledge of the principles and practice of his profession, of the duties both of officers and soldiers, in their minutest details as well as in their most comprehensive scope, which has ever distinguished his subsequent career in arms. Beside the advantage of habitual, frequent intercourse with that exalted character General Hamilton, General North, Macomb's immediate master, was reputed one of the most scientific and practical officers of the revolu-

tionary Army. He had been the Aide de Camp of that excellent soldier Baron Steuben, and rendered him valuable assistance in the introduction and establishment of a regular system of police, tactics, discipline, and accountability. He was continued in the Army after the Revolution, for the purpose of organizing the small force retained for the protection of our infant settlements and exposed frontiers against the inroads of the savages.

In addition to the duties which appertained to the Adjt. General's office, so well calculated to familarize the mind with all the varied operations of an Army, affording the best school which a camp can offer to all attached to that department, General North, who was also, ex officio, Assistant Inspr. General, was required to discharge other important functions; being engaged, in this latter capacity, with General Hamilton, the Inspector General, in forming and examining the several corps, as also in compiling and adapting systems of regulation for each arm of service. Discussions were frequent between the Adjutant General and the Inspector General; and many principles were settled growing out of command, courts martial, and other points of duty, in the course of service, which were referred to the Head Quarters of the Army. These gentlemen, schooled in the Army of the Revolution, formed their opinions on the coolest judgment and the strictest military

principles. Justice to the officers of that Army, generally, warrants the acknowledgment, that they not only learned the theory of war, but reduced it to practice, according to the then most approved rules of the art, and in a manner worthy the imitation of all their successors. The Order Books of General Washington and the military correspondence of the times will be found, on recurrence to them, pregnant with lessons of wisdom and experience. Subordination, a nice adjustment of duties, a rigid execution of those duties, a spirit of chivalry and patriotism, untaught by other records, breathe through the whole of them. An eulogy similar to that on the old Congress, which, flowing from the eloquent lips of Chatham, immortalized both the speaker and his subject, might well be pronounced on the achievements without means, on the sufferings without parallel, on the unsleeping eye and unwearied arm, the enduring constancy, the self-sacrificing devotedness, the Grecian genius, and more than Roman hardihood, of THE ARMY OF THE REVOLUTION.

In order to their instruction, the troops were brigaded and cantoned in different parts of the country, reference being had to their advantageous position for the defence of the country in case of invasion. Generals Hamilton and North personally superintended their instruction, which further enabled Macomb, who al-

ways accompanied them, to improve himself in his profession. France having at length yielded to a satisfactory arrangement, the Army was reduced to the number of Regiments which formed the establishment prior to 1799. Macomb availed himself of the permission of General Hamilton to go into Canada, and see the British troops stationed at Montreal and in its vicinity, in order to make himself acquainted with the mode of discipline practised by the British Army.

He was kindly received by the British Commanding General Napier Christie Burton, and the other officers of that station. Every facility was granted him for visiting the troops in quarters and when under arms at the frequent reviews of manœuvre and inspection. He was, besides, much favoured through the influence of Sir John Johnson, the uncle of his brother-in-law, Mr. Kennedy, whose invitation to reside at his mansion he accepted during the period of his visit at that city.

On his return to the United States, he found himself retained in the military establishment as a second Lieutenant in one of the old Troops of Dragoons, which composed part of his former Regiment. This commission he received the 10th of February, 1801, from the hand of President Jefferson. He was now ordered, on the recruiting service, to Philadelphia. This city offered many advantages to a young man of the age of

Macomb, then about nineteen years old. Accomplished society, choice and extensive libraries, and public institutions of almost every kind, were well calculated to engage the attention, and improve the leisure, of those who would frequent them. Instead of yielding to the wonted dissipation or idle amusements of youth, he devoted himself to sober employments, or indulged in those refined pleasures of literary and social communion which the city of "brotherly love" presented. He was particularly fortunate in meeting here an able French officer of Engineers; who, escaping the proscriptions of his own country, sought our shores, but, like most of his exiled countrymen, brought no resources beyond his education, talent, and address. Taken with the open air and vivacious spirit of Macomb, he was delighted to find in him a companion who spoke his own language; and proposed to pass him through a course of instruction in the science of fortification and military topography. The proposition was quickly accepted, as it tended to open to him a further progress in important branches of his profession, and to keep alive his knowledge of the French Language. He now also commenced a friendship, which each subsequent year served only to confirm, with Jonathan Williams, Esq., a gentleman of learning and science, who had just been appointed Major of one of

the Battalions of the 2d Regiment of Artillerists and Engineers, and Inspector of Fortifications, and who, afterwards, was placed at the head of the Corps of Engineers.

Having raised a handsome body of recruits, Macomb marched them to join the Army under Gen. Wilkinson at Pittsburg. Although, as a Dragoon Officer, entitled to be mounted, yet having a number of Subaltern officers of Infantry under his command, he declined any exclusive personal indulgence, and proceeded with the party on foot a distance, by the ancient route, of three hundred and twenty miles. An humorous occurrence, not devoid of interest in a military point of view, happened to the detachment on the way, which is still well remembered by the inhabitants near *Turtle Creek*. An officer of superior rank, heading a small body of recruits, overtook Macomb's, at Chambersburg, and, uniting forces, assumed the command of the whole. The party, now consisting of about 150 men, with the usual complement of women, halted in the morning on an island near the crossing place at Turtle Creek. This was in the month of May, when heavy showers are frequent in the mountains bordering the Creek. Macomb, being officer of the day, and learning the intention of the Commanding Officer to encamp on the island, remonstrated against the measure, alleging that

the island, lying under the mountains, was obviously liable to be inundated, pointing out at the same time the drift wood on the head of the island, as an evident indication of that fact. The Commanding Officer, disdaining the representations of his junior, authoritatively ordered the tents to be pitched. The camp was soon formed—the men became busy in brushing up their arms and accoutrements—and the women in washing their clothes. At tattoo, they retired to rest. But the day had scarcely closed, when appalling thunder indicated too clearly a coming flood. Pouring down the sides of the mountains, the rain soon swelled the water of the Creek, which at noon was nearly dry, to a level with the island. Through the pitchy darkness of the night, the lightnings revealed the approaching danger. The torrents continued to pour, and the floods to rise. The drums beat to arms—the tents were struck—the wagons were made fast to any fixture—the women scrambled into the wagons, and the men up the trees—and the horses were swum by their drivers across the Creek. In this plight, so ludicrous if it had not been dangerous, in which they remained through the night, daylight both exposed and relieved them. The inhabitants came to their rescue on floats, from which, on returning, many were swept by the force of the stream, and floated about like the fragments

of a wreck. On main land once more, from the *disagremen* of accompanying a drenched and all but drowned party, which a little while before had worn a most soldier-like appearance, and which Macomb had spared neither pains nor expense in equipping and ornamenting, he was extricated by his Commanding Officer, who, having now dearly bought an useful lesson in the art of *castrametation*, and learned to appreciate Macomb's advice, despatched him to Gen. Wilkinson for fresh supplies of provisions and clothing.

The detachment having at length arrived at the Head Quarters of General Wilkinson, was marched into a camp, which had been formed for the instruction of recruits, destined to fill the several Regiments stationed on the Lakes and other western waters. In this camp, through a precaution of the utmost importance to an army, all recruits were inoculated to guard them against the small-pox, previously to joining their respective Regiments. While at Pittsburg, Macomb met his friend Major Williams, who, as Inspector of Fortifications, had been making an examination of the Niagara frontier, and who was then engaged in projecting a work to be erected on Black Rock, opposite Fort Erie. The Major, in the press of business, required an assistant, and knowing Macomb to have paid attention to the study of fortification, obtained an order from the

Commanding General for his aid in preparing the drawings, calculations, estimates and memoirs, necessary to illustrate the plans of the proposed work. As he had now been some time with the troops under General Wilkinson, the latter mentioned to him that he had received letters from Generals Hamilton and North, recommending him to his care and protection. Although Wilkinson had not thus far evinced any special regard for him, yet he had not been unobservant of his conduct in camp, and expressed himself pleased with his attention to his duties. The General then directed that the detachments in the camp of instruction should join their Regiments, and invited Lieut. Macomb to become a member of his military family in the quality of an extra Aide de Camp.

Shortly after Macomb had entered the encampment beyond the Alleghany, an incident occurred which came near doing him a serious injury. An officer visited him in his tent, and in the course of conversation, broached the politics of the day, the principal theme of which was the change of administration, Mr. Jefferson having been not long before elected to the Presidency. This officer was very abusive of the new President, in terms not merely indecorous, but punishable by the Articles of War. Disapproving of such intemperance, Macomb begged him not to continue a

language, so disrespectful to the head of the Army and the Nation, and which, used any where but in his own tent, he would feel constrained to notice, as a breach of discipline. The expressions were overheard, attributed to Macomb, and reported to Head Quarters, for which he received a severe reprimand. He, however, soon succeeded in satisfying the General of his innocence of the charge, though without exposing the officer guilty of the indecorum.

The camp being broken up, he repaired to Head Quarters, to take upon him the duties of Aide de Camp. General Wilkinson had, for some time, been collecting troops at the mouth of the Ohio, at a place called Wilkinsonville, with a view to form a camp of instruction, on a scale sufficiently extensive to enable him to practice the evolutions of the Line, and give the officers a more practical knowledge of their duties. The 2d Regiment of Infantry under Col. Strong, and the 4th Regiment under Col. Thomas Butler, together with a Battalion of Artillery, formed the assembled force. The recruits destined to fill these corps were embarked at Pittsburg, and acted as the crews to navigate the boats down the river. The position selected for the encampment proved unhealthy, especially to the Artillery Battalion, and the 2d Regiment composed principally of recruits. But the 4th Regiment, filled with a hardy

set of old soldiers, long accustomed both to the camp and the climate, suffered less. Their superior health may also, probably, be attributed to their use of the river water, there being no springs in the vicinity; while the other troops, at some distance from the 4th Regiment, derived their supply of water from springs, probably rendered deleterious by some mineral impregnation. From this circumstance, it would seem expedient, in stationary encampments, to subject the water for the use of the soldiery, if previously untried, to a chymical analysis. The prevailing sickness determined the General to remove the troops further up the Ohio, to a place near the mouth of the Cumberland, called Smithfield.

General Wilkinson, General Pickens, and Colonel Hawkins, were now appointed Commissioners to treat with the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Creeks, Tribes of Indians, then inhabiting what was called the South Western Territory, a considerable tract of country lying between the States of Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee, the Mississippi River, and the Floridas. This Commission was appointed to assemble at South West Point, at the junction of the Clinch and Tennessee Rivers, in the month of August, 1801. General Wilkinson, taking with him Lieut. Macomb, who was appointed Secretary to this commission, left Wil-

kinsonville, descended the Ohio to the mouth of the Cumberland, thence to Eddyville, where he was met by Mr. Matthew Lyon, a member of Congress, who obligingly showed the General the way into the Barrens, which lie between that place and Nashville; and thence proceeded to South West Point.

The Commissioners failed to acquire new cessions of land from the Cherokees, they having imbibed ideas of individual property, and being advanced, far beyond the other Tribes, in the arts of civilization. The Commission, therefore, on the 11th of September returned, descending the Tennessee; and having their arks prepared at Wilkinsonville, continued to the Chickasaw Bluff, where a satisfactory treaty was soon negociated with the Chickasaws. Thence proceeding down the Mississippi to Fort Adams, about thirty miles below Natchez, a position taken by the United States to assert their claim to the line of limits between the Floridas and the 31st degree of North Latitude, the Commission, after an inspection and review of the Troops, opened a negociation with the Choctaws, who finally entered into the arrangements sought by the Government. Winter approaching, it being now the beginning of December, the boats were abandoned, and the country traversed from this point to Fort Wilkinson on the Oconee in Georgia, near which Fort measures were to

be adopted for the settlement of some disputes, and to obtain all the country, as far as the Ocmulgee. Macomb still accompanied the Commissioners, who set out on horseback, with a small guard of Light Dragoons, for Tuckabatche, the residence of the United States Agent, Col. Hawkins. Here he spent the winter, in the very heart of the Creek Nation, Wilkinson and Pickens having returned. The Creeks assembled in June, 1802, and the treaty was concluded the ensuing month. This treaty was held on the identical spot, on which Milledgeville is built, the present Capital of the State of Georgia. It was now upwards of 300 days that Macomb had been engaged in the Mission, all of which time he spent, in the woods, among the Aborigines. During this tour Macomb kept a minute journal, in which he noted the courses and distances of streams and positions, the productions of the soil, the geological and geographical physiognomy of the country. He also delineated with great care the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers, and constructed a topographical map, which was deposited in the War office and received the marked approval of Mr. Jefferson.

The object for which the Commission was instituted having been accomplished, as far as practicable, Macomb was despatched with the treaties and accounts to Washington, by the way of Charleston. He spent

a few days at this latter city, in the enjoyment of that elegant hospitality for which it is so justly celebrated, and thence proceeded to the seat of Government. While he was engaged on the Commission, our little army had been reduced. The four Regiments of Infantry were formed into two Regiments, and the two Regiments of Artillery and Engineers into one Regiment of Artillery. The Dragoons were disbanded, and a Corps of Engineers was authorized to be raised, to consist of one Major, two Captains, two 1st and two 2d Lieutenants, and ten Cadets, which Corps was to constitute, when organized, the Military Academy; the President being empowered to augment the Corps and make promotions in it, with a view to particular merit, and without regard to rank. Lieutenant Macomb found himself among the number of officers retained, and arranged to the 1st Regiment of Infantry. Feeling rather reduced than advanced, in his relative rank, he remonstrated with the Secretary of War. The Secretary replied that his general talents and merits as an officer, especially as a Draftsman and Engineer, had not been overlooked—that Major Williams had made a highly favourable report of him—and that, in consequence, a place in the Corps of Engineers, as 1st Lieutenant, had been reserved for him, should it be agreeable to him to accept it. Such a flattering mark of attention from the

Head of the Department must have been highly gratifying to Macomb, who had always aimed to make himself a proficient in that branch of service, to which he was to be transferred; and he accordingly accepted the commission, bearing date the 12th of October, 1802.

He now received orders to repair to West Point, and report himself to Lieutenant Colonel Williams, Superintendent of the Military Academy. That institution was just then going into operation. The Field Officers and Captains of the Corps of Engineers acted as Professors, with the addition of two Teachers, one of the French Language and one of Drawing. The Lieutenants and Cadets were considered as students, and were obliged to go through the established course, preparatory to being employed on the fortifications. At the proper time, Lieutenant Macomb was examined, and declared to have attained the requisite qualifications, of which due report was made by the Superintendent to the War Department. He may, therefore, be considered the eldest graduate, now in the service, of that institution. He was then appointed to do the duty of Adjutant, and to instruct the Cadets in their military exercises. He was the officer who first organized them into a Corps, and put arms in their hands.

In the ensuing year, July 23d, 1803, he married his cousin, Miss Catharine Macomb, of Belville, in New-

Jersey, a beautiful and highly accomplished young lady of sixteen. In the autumn of that year, he was ordered to attend a General Court Martial, convened at Fredericktown, in Maryland, for the trial of Colonel Thomas Butler. The Colonel, it seems, had refused to obey an order of General Wilkinson, requiring the hair of the officers and soldiers to be cropped. The old fashion queue, worn in the revolution, was still seen appended to the venerable heads of those gallant men, who yet remained in the service of their country. This instance of disobedience in the brave veteran, although undoubtedly a breach of rigid discipline, could not impeach his character, nor impair his standing. While his defence was reading and appeals were made to his past services, every eye melted in sympathy and sorrow, or kindled with indignation at what some conceived an arbitrary exertion of authority. The Court, however, sustained the validity of the regulation, and sentenced the Colonel to be reprimanded in general orders. Macomb had been appointed Judge Advocate to this Court, which continued its session for the trial of several other officers. During the trials, Macomb acquitted himself so well, and exhibited so correct a knowledge, both of military law and the mode of proceedings, that the members of the Court suggested to him the advantage which would accrue to the service, if he

should compose a Treatise as a general guide for the conduct of Courts Martial: a work which he subsequently executed.

As a great proportion of the Field Officers of the Army, representatives from every Regiment and Corps, attended the General Court Martial, Lieut. Macomb, young as he was, submitted to them the expediency of forming all the officers of the Army into a society for the purpose of affording protection to the superannuated veteran, and to the widows and orphans of such officers as might die in the service. In order to effect this highly laudable object, he proposed that each officer should subscribe a certain per-centage on his pay, and that Congress be memorialized to grant a charter, together with any endowment it might be pleased to appropriate. The project was laid before the Secretary of War, who gave it his sanction; but, before any step could be taken toward its accomplishment, the officers had returned to their respective stations. It is to be hoped, however, that so benevolent a plan of permanent utility may yet be realized.

Macomb returned to West Point, where he continued his studies and military exercises, except when called off, to act as Judge Advocate or member of General Courts Martial, until some time in May, 1805, when he repaired to Washington to make a final set-

tlement of his accounts, as late Secretary to the Commissioners, which had not been closed, although rendered at the proper time. He availed himsef of this opportunity to present a very strong letter, recommending him for promotion, from his Colonel the Superintendent of the Military Academy, together with a letter from the Commissioners, expressing their entire satisfaction with his services, and commending him warmly to the patronage of the Government. General Dearborn, the then Secretary of War, approved his accounts, and ordered a letter of appointment to be issued to Macomb as Captain in the Corps of Engineers, bearing rank from the 11th of June, 1805.

The works in the harbour of Portsmouth, in the State of New-Hampshire, requiring repairs, Captain Macomb was now ordered thither. Having satisfactorily finished this labour, he was next year appointed Superintendent of the important public works then being erected at Mount Dearborn, on the Cataba river in South Carolina, about thirty-six miles above Camden, where it was intended to establish a Depot and national Armory for the Southern States. It was during the period of his employment at this place, that he compiled his treatise on Courts Martial, in conformity with the wishes formerly expressed by his brother officers. He submitted it to the inspection of General

William R. Davie, a distinguished officer of the Revolution, a profound jurist, a gentleman who had approved himself at once a scholar, statesman, and soldier. He happened to be one of Macomb's nearest neighbours, being settled on his farm called Tivoli, near Landsford, almost eighteen miles distant from Mount Dearborn. The isolated situation of Davie and Macomb rendered an intercourse exceedingly agreeable, which soon ripened into intimacy and friendship. Perhaps no man could have been a better Mentor for an young soldier, than General Davie ; for he had practiced the art of war in the field, was conversant with the events of the Revolution, familiar, by his political and historical studies, with the theory and operation of governments, and, having been Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to France during the Consulate of Buonaparte, he had witnessed the preparations for that splendid campaign which brought on the battle of Marengo, and carefully acquainted himself with all the military as well as political improvements which were making in that country in those brilliant days of her prowess and renown. Such was the exalted opinion entertained of his character and capacity, that he was offered in the late war the appointment of Major General, although of the party opposed to the Administration, but which appointment he declined only, however,

on account of his infirmities, the result of a severe wound at the battle of Stono in the revolutionary war. Macomb submitted his Treatise to the criticism, also, of Major General Charles Cotsworth Pinckney, another worthy of the Revolution, an associate of Davie in the mission to France, and alike distinguished by his military acquirements and profound legal knowledge. These gentlemen pruned it of what they considered of a doubtful character, and suggested such improvements as their judgment dictated. The work was then printed, and presented to the Government. It received the approbation of the President and the Secretary of War, was adopted as the standard for the guidance of Courts Martial, and issued to the Army. It has ever since retained its official character, well sustained by its intrinsic merits.

Captain Macomb continued to conduct the works at Mount Dearborn until the year 1807, when he was instructed to take the general direction, as Chief Engineer, of the fortifications and other works contemplated for the defence of the harbours of the two Carolinas and Georgia. The conduct, at this time, of certain British vessels of war on our coast had been such as to oblige President Jefferson to issue his proclamation, interdicting them the waters of the United States. The Authorities of Charleston, finding their city much exposed

from the dilapidated condition into which the forts had fallen, became alarmed for their safety in the case of a rupture with Great Britain, especially as a vessel of war, subsequently to the proclamation, had entered the harbour, forcibly obtained a supply of water, and threatened retaliation. At the request of the Commander of the harbour, and to satisfy the citizens, Macomb repaired to Charleston, erected some temporary batteries at Fort Johnson, and mounted a sufficient number of heavy guns to make it inexpedient for any vessel of war to venture within reach of them. He then made a reconnoisance of the whole coast from Occracock Inlet to the River St. Mary's, which divided the United States from the Floridas, and projected a system of temporary works for the defence of all the principal harbours and inlets.

The attack upon the Frigate Chesapeake by the Leopard, a British ship of war, in June, 1807, roused the people to a sense of their violated sovereignty. All parties exclaimed, with one voice, that instant measures should be adopted to redress our injured honour, and vindicate our flag on land and water. Congress, almost always lagging behind the people, yet yielded appropriations for fortifying the principal points on our coasts; and augmented the Army, by one Regiment of Riflemen, and one Regiment of Light Artillery, one

Regiment of Light Dragoons, and five Regiments of Infantry. They also provided for an increase of the naval force, and for calling out the Militia and Volunteers.

Previously to the raising of this additional force, Macomb had been promoted to be Major of the Corps of Engineers, taking rank from the 3d of February, 1808. Arrangements having been made for the commencement of the works along the coast, Major Macomb began those intended for the defence of Charleston, and superintended them until the spring of 1812. On the 25th of February, 1811, Macomb had been promoted to be Lieutenant Colonel of the same Corps. In the month of September ensuing, he was detailed to sit as a member of a General Court Martial, assembled at Fredericktown, in Maryland, for the trial of Major General Wilkinson, his old Commander and friend. The General, however, was honourably acquitted of all the articles of accusation. The sympathy, formerly exhibited by the generous-hearted inhabitants of this town on the trial of Butler, was now, in an equal degree, extended toward Wilkinson, a man of genius and courage, of military experience, learning, and resources, and yet the victim of misfortune. The American People instinctively repel the idea of oppres-

sion, assume what guise it may ; and hence are predisposed to shield the persecuted and the unfortunate.

Parties in the United States, at this time, were in fearful collision. The distracted and conflicting opinions in Congress rendered the course it would pursue, impossible to conjecture. Between the English Orders in Council, and the Berlin and Milan Decrees, our commerce was all but annihilated, and our resources proportionally diminished. In this crisis of affairs, finding peace for themselves impracticable between the two belligerents, the United States were compelled, once more, to appeal to the sword, as the final arbiter of disputes which negociation had failed to reach. The military and naval establishments, by successive legislation, were increased. The Secretary of War Eustis, desiring Lieut. Col. Macomb, to assist him in organizing the new Army, called him from his duties as Chief Engineer for the Southern States, and appointed him, on the 28th April, 1812, Adjutant General at the seat of Government. In this momentous exigency, he was charged with the most important trusts. Every thing was to be remoulded and cast into a warlike frame. The defects of the former system, growing up through a long period of peace, were palpable and manifold. The want of a well arranged Staff, susceptible of expansion to suit the emergencies of active service ; of general, regimental, com-

pany, and garrison regulations; of local arrangements into departments and districts; of an uniform course of tactics; of a regular, rigid system of disbursements and accountability; was to be supplied. The Regiments, raised under the several acts of Congress, were differently constituted, both as to the strength of companies, and the number of companies in a Regiment, although of the same Corps—some conforming to the English, others to the French model. All these irregularities, he perceived, at once, with a keen military ken, could be productive only of confusion, extravagance, and inefficiency, and consequent disaster and disgrace. He, therefore, with wonted zeal and persevering energy, bent himself down to the task of their reformation. He exerted his best capacity to establish an uniform organization through the army, and to introduce appropriate instructions for the respective arms of service. He also proceeded, in conjunction with General Smyth the Inspector General, and Colonel Pike the Acting Quarter Master General, to designate and define the duties of the General Staff, to create depots of recruits, and infuse a spirit of activity into the preparations for the coming conflict. These arduous duties he effectually discharged, as far as limited time and means, and the pressure of the occasion, would permit.

While thus employed, Colonel Williams, finding him-

self incompetent, from the infirmities of advancing age, to the personal performance of his functions as Commander of the Corps of Engineers, offered to resign in favour of Lieut. Col. Macomb; but Macomb, in common with the other members of the Corps, cherishing a high regard for Williams, both as a valuable officer, and an estimable man, begged him to remain at the head of the Corps and the Academy, as their Parent and Patron, "decusque ornamentum;" while Macomb, though stationed at the Seat of Government, charged himself with the duties and responsibility of the immediate command. This arrangement, so generous in Macomb, as well as honourable to the character, and gratifying to the feelings of Col. Williams, was accepted by him with the liveliest sensibility and gratitude.

War was, at length, determined on. It was not for a man like Macomb to linger among the bureaux and in the coteries of Washington, when the star-studded banner, emblem of freedom and the Republic, was unfurled upon our ramparts, and floating in the camp. Our republican Court could present no allurements to him, while the laurelled field of war was outspread before him—victory, with her palmy honours, beckoning him to her embrace—and a nation's wrongs crying to her champions for redress. He immediately sought a command in the line of the Army. This, as an officer of

the Engineers, under the existing rules of service, he could not receive.

In a conversation with Calhoun and Lowndes, members of Congress, from South Carolina, on the disadvantage and injustice of depriving the Engineers of the right of command, because their functions appertained to the higher branches of military science, Macomb urged that the avowed motive of their exclusion from the common privilege of officers was the strongest possible argument for their possession of it; and, to illustrate this position, stated, by way of example, that if the city of Washington should be attacked, and an officer of the Engineers be present, he, although possibly the fittest person both to plan and to execute the means of its defence, could not exercise command, in accordance with his rank. Macomb, also, with his accustomed forecast, predicted to these gentlemen, that, in the event of war, the Capital would, in all propability, be attempted; and, unless the necessary measures of defence were adopted, would be carried by a coup de main, there being so many avenues, on which it might be approached by an enemy arriving in the Chesapeake.

Sacrificing now, without hesitation, his permanent and most honuorable situation as Chief of the Engineer Corps, Macomb asked to be appointed to one of the new Regiments of Artillery. New-York being considered

as entitled by allotment to that appointment, it was promised to him, if the Delegation of his State would agree to recommend him for it. He hinted this declaration of the Secretary of War, to the Hon. Samuel L. Mitchell, the Senator from New-York, who, with cheerfulness and alacrity, procured the assent of all the Delegation. Macomb was accordingly commissioned on the 6th of July, 1812, Colonel of the 3d Regiment of Artillery, to consist of twenty companies, of 118 men each. Colonel Macomb forthwith repaired to New-York and commenced the raising of his Regiment. Raised, equipped, organized, and disciplined, under his auspices, it soon constituted one of the finest, if not the very best, body of soldiers, in the American service. The air, esprit du corps, and efficiency of the Regiment, the character and intelligence of its officers, the strict subordination, soldierly deportment, and practiced tactics of the men, were universally admired, and became a model for the imitation of the Army. The example diffused a fine impulse, and stimulated the emulation of the less perfect troops.

He assembled his Regiment at Greenbush ; and in November, 1812, marched it, by forced stages, to Sackett's Harbour, in order to embark it on board Commodore Chauncey's fleet, for the purpose of making an attack on Kingston. But, on the arrival of the Regi-

ment, Chauncey had sailed; and the winter prematurely setting in, it was decided, in a council of war, in consequence of the liability of the Lake to be suddenly frozen over, that the contemplated enterprise must be deferred until the Spring. Macomb was compelled, therefore, to erect a cantonment at Sackett's Harbour, when the troops went into quarters, the 1st of January ensuing, necessarily exposed, until that time, to dwell, in that most inclement climate and season, in houses of canvass amid banks of snow. Colonel Macomb was authorized to assume the command of Sackett's Harbour and the adjacent country, and also to convene General Courts Martial, and decide on their proceedings—so that he was now invested with a complete and independent command, except as to General Dearborn the Major General Commanding in Chief. There were assembled at this station, beside sailors and marines for the fleet, a considerable number of militia, and volunteers. Such were the conciliatory manners and address of Colonel Macomb, that an entire harmony of feeling and co-operation prevailed throughout his command, notwithstanding the contrariety of characters and variety of interests composing it. The troops being settled in winter quarters, he was indefatigable in personally attending the company and batallion drills and the evolutions of the line. Being for the most part in

the immediate command of the troops at this station, it was his habit and delight to practice them in all the varied combinations and manœuvres of tactical science and skill, the amount of force being sufficient to illustrate, practically, all the movements of an army, with the different arms proper to its composition. He frequently exercised them also on the ice of the Lakes, to inure them to the rigours of the cold and the fatigues of marching.

Toward the close of the winter of 1812-13, he revived the design of attacking Kingston, principally with the view of destroying the enemy's vessels of war moored in the ice of that harbour. As some irregularities had taken place along the frontier, disturbing the peaceful inhabitants on either border, he availed himself of that circumstance as a pretext for sending a flag of truce across the Lake, ostensibly to bear a complaint against these marauding parties, and the proposal of an arrangement for putting a stop to such grievances in future; but really to ascertain whether the ice was sufficiently sound, and free from crevices, in the whole direction to Kingston. This mission was intrusted to Captain, now Colonel Crane, of the Artillery. The flag was borne on a Cariole, which entered the town unobserved, proceeded to the Quarters of the British General, and returned without interruption,

bringing the desired intelligence. The troops, meanwhile, were duly prepared; and the sailors, under Captain Leonard of the Navy, were furnished with ladders for scaling the sides of the Birtish ships. To cover the design, an alarm was circulated, that Sir George Provost was about to attack Sackett's Harbour, and that he was collecting troops at Kingston for the purpose. The rumour, spreading on the wings of the wind, reached the ears of General Dearborn, at Albany, who, taking it for a real alarm, set out forthwith in a sleigh and four horses, and reached Sackett's Harbour in 48 hours. To convince the General that the whole was a mere device to deceive the enemy was found impossible. No—he had received credible reports from various quarters of the meditated attack. Under this conviction, he ordered all our troops at Plattsburgh to hasten to the succour of the threatened post. The deep snows prevented their march on foot; and, consequently, sleighs were hired or pressed to bring on Chandler's and Pike's Brigades, by the St. Lawrence route. Instead of an attack, the troops were now put on the defensive. Thus the incipient project was nipped in the bud: a sore disappointment, not only to Macomb, but to the officers of his command, who were panting for victory, and who, in imagination, had already reaped promotion.

Commodore Chauncey, who had been absent at New-York, during the early part of the winter, after his squadron was laid up, on hearing the alarm, had also repaired to the Harbour. General Dearborn, always circumspect, yet firm, soon afterward held a council of war, consisting of himself, Commodore Chauncey, and Colonel Macomb, when it was decided, that the season was too far advanced, to justify the attack of Kingston on the ice; but that preparations should be made for an attack by land and sea, on either Kingston or York as might be deemed most expedient, for the expulsion of the British forces from Lake Ontario, and, subsequently, from Fort George and the Niagara frontier. General Pike, who was just then promoted to the rank of a Brigadier, was to conduct the contemplated expedition, and Colonel Macomb to continue in command of Sackett's Harbour. York was the point selected for attack. Though bravely defended, it was still more bravely captured, by many feats of heroism; yet with great loss on the American side, from the explosion of a magazine. The ruins of York were the mausoleum for some of our finest soldiers; and here the gallant Pike breathed out his spirit into the arms of victory.

The attack on Fort George was to be the next enterprise. Macomb's Regiment, both from its established

discipline and the nature of its arm, was regarded by General Dearborn as the most suitable for the defence of Sackett's Harbour, and was reluctant to withdraw it from that important post. Yet as the officers of that Regiment could ill restrain their impatience to participate in the movements of the field and the honours of conquest, and earnestly petitioned to join the enterprise, the Commander in Chief yielded up, in a degree, the dictates of his own judgment to the gratification of their ambition, and permitted a part of the Regiment to embark with the fleet; but, justly weighing the vast importance of the safety of that Harbour, peremptorily ordered Macomb to remain with the residue of the troops, for its protection; and, especially to concert and execute, in conjunction with Commodore Chauncey, the necessary measures for the security of the naval stores and of the shipping then building, which were essential to give the American fleet the ascendancy on the Lakes.

In submitting to a separation, in this instance, from a part of his Regiment, Macomb acted on those pure exalted principles, which lose sight of all personal considerations, in unbounded devotion to the interests of the service and of the country; like Washington, whose love of glory was always subordinate to his sense of duty and of patriotism. Indeed Macomb's avowed

maxim has always been, that the first duty of a soldier, next to his obligations to his country, is obedience to orders. Macomb now employed himself in strengthening the defences, and obstructing every avenue of approach. On his own responsibility, he stopped the troops ordered for the Niagara frontier, and directed them to march to the Harbour. Having executed every practicable measure, for the security of the place, he put Colonel Backus of the Light Dragoons in the command, and gave him a letter from General Dearborn calling out the Militia of the vicinity, to be presented to General Brown then commanding the Militia, in case the enemy should appear on the Lake in a threatening attitude toward that point. He also left with Colonel Backus a plan of the Harbour, with his own opinion of the best mode of stationing the troops in case of attack, indicating on the map the only points assailable.

Macomb having satisfied that excellent officer Commodore Chauncey, that every thing was done which lay in his power, and that, if his directions were followed, the Harbour in all human probability would be safe until the fleet could return, they embarked together, and joined the army and fleet at the Four Mile Creek, a short distance from the mouth of the Niagara on the American side. Their arrival was on the 11th of May, when every preparation for the attack was already

made, waiting only for Commodore Chauncey. General Dearborn, regretting the anticipated departure of Macomb from Sackett's Harbour, had despatched a fast sailing Schooner "The Lady of the Lake," to meet him, and direct him to return, the General's apprehensions for the safety of that place having greatly increased. The Schooner, however, missed Macomb in the night; and he reported himself the next morning to the General. The commands having been all assigned to the General and other principal officers, General Dearborn formed a sort of second reserve of Macomb's Regiment and the Marines. The force debarked in the morning of the 13th of May, and, after a brisk fire with the enemy, who soon gave way, gained quiet possession of the town of Niagara and Fort George. The resistance to our arms was too quickly subdued, and the flight too precipitate, to allow much scope for the display of generalship. The enemy having been completely routed in all directions, Colonel Macomb received orders to return with four companies of his Regiment, with all despatch, to Sackett's Harbour. Commodore Chauncey received the Colonel and his troops on board his fleet and returned; but, on his way, sailed over toward Kingston, to ascertain whether the enemy was in port—if so, to give him an opportunity of coming out for an engagement; and if not, to meet him on

the Lake. He found the enemy snugly moored under the batteries of Kingston, who manifested no desire to change his position. Chauncey, then, steered for our Harbour, on approaching which it was evident that the enemy had visited it. The magazine of stores, fired by our own officers to prevent its falling into the enemy's hands, was still smoking. But the precautions taken, and the instructions given, by Colonel Macomb, prior to his departure for Fort George, had produced their desired effect, and the enemy was defeated. Colonel Macomb relieved General Brown, then Brigadier General of the Militia. Colonel Backus he found in his quarters, who was suffering from a wound in the action, and died a few days after. To this affair, General Brown owed his first appointment in the Army, the President conferring on him the rank of Brigadier General in the regular service. This appointment at the time excited much dissatisfaction. It was considered, by some, as a flagrant violation of the rights of the regular officers, and more particularly of Macomb himself. A cabal was getting up, by those who had erroneously imbibed unfavorable impressions against Brown, from the slanders which the opponents of the Administration had heaped upon him. But Macomb used every exertion to allay the ferment. He always exhibited the greatest respect for General Brown,

and hoped, by the influence of his personal example, to re-establish that harmony, without which the Army can be neither useful to the State, nor honourable to itself. He represented, and strongly impressed upon the officers, the rights of the Government, and their duty of obedience. General Brown's subsequent valuable services, his sound common sense, his undaunted firmness and energy, and the many good qualities of his character, as well as his former political standing and popular influence, sufficiently indicate the propriety of his appointment.

In the summer of 1813, General Wilkinson took command of the Northern Army, and arrangements were made for the invasion of Canada. Macomb was first assigned to the command of the Artillery, amounting to 45 pieces of all calibers and descriptions. This quantity of ordnance he conceived to be unnecessarily great, and too ponderous for the expedition on foot. He, therefore, recommended to General Wilkinson to reduce it to two 18 pounders, four 8 inch howitzers, and four 6 pounders, as the country in which the Army was to operate would not admit of, nor the occasion require, a larger complement of field artillery—there being nothing to be besieged, except some field-works, block-houses, and perhaps strong stone-buildings. As this opinion was in direct opposition to Wilkinson's, he pro-

posed to Macomb to take command of the Elite, composed of his own Regiment, the 20th Regiment, Forsyth's Riflemen, and Major Herkimer's New-York Volunteers, amounting in all to about 1600 men. This command was, in the order of battle, called the Reserve; and was to be disposed of under the special orders of the Commander in Chief. The proposition was readily accepted by Macomb, as he foresaw that there would be little use for Artillery in the contemplated expedition. The Artillery was then transferred to Brevet Brigadier General Porter, who had just arrived from the Niagara frontier. The batteaux being provided and distributed, and every practicable preparation made for the campaign, the whole army was ordered to rendezvous at Grenadier Island, near the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and nearly opposite Kingston. To this place the Division, which had been serving on the Niagara, repaired, under Brig. Gen. Boyd. Brig. Gen. Brown, also, availing himself of a good wind, arrived thither from Sackett's Harbour. The Reserve and the Artillery were kept back by the want of necessary transports. Violent storms, so peculiarly dangerous on the Lakes, prevailed at this time, it being about the middle of October; but General Wilkinson, impatient of delay, directed the boats to set out, and try the Lake at all hazards. The boats, crammed with men, provisions,

artillery, and munitions, were difficult of management; and the wind rising into a tempest on that turbulent sea, endangered the whole flotilla, rendering the navigation of it impracticable. Macomb, with his Corps, succeeded in reaching Chaumont Bay, while the greater part of the boats was dispersed, some luckily escaping to the shore, some filled with the billows, and others dashed upon the rocks. On the subsiding of the storm, the boats were repaired, and pursued their destination. One of the boats, with an officer and thirty men, was driven into Kingston: which circumstance apprized the enemy of the movement of the army, and prompted him to send out his gun-brigs to watch our further progress.

The force collected on Grenadier Island amounted to something like 8000 men. On the 1st of November the army proceeded in their beatteaux to French Creek, where an order was issued, assigning the relative positions to be observed, in sailing, by the several Corps and Brigades, and by the store-vessels. The enemy appeared from behind the Islands, with two gun-brigs, two schooners and ten gun-boats; and opened a fire on the camp, doing some execution, but was soon repelled with loss by our cannon. The American fleet heaving in sight, the hostile flotilla effected its escape among the numerous islands. The climate now wore

its serenest aspect. The surrounding scenery, under our autumnal sky so justly praised for its unrivalled beauties, was clothed with robes of mellow richness which presented a thousand vivid and ever varying hues, and invested the objects of the landscape, sky, water and foliage and the clustered islands, in prismatic splendour. The troops re-embarked in the various boats and barges, each bearing a flag to designate the particular Brigade, Corps, or department, to which it belonged—the General in Chief carrying the American ensign at his mast head—the others, red, blue, white, green, yellow, or black badges and banners, according to order. Three hundred boats of different sizes, accompanied by the fleet under Chauncey, combining the pegeantry of war with the safety of peace, quietly floating along, like gondolas of a gala day, on the beautiful bosom of the majestic St. Lawrence, afforded a spectacle entirely novel, enrapturing, and grand.

The fleet returned in search of the enemy. The troops were disembarked near Ogdensburgh, and placed under the direction of Colonel Macomb, who was to lead them through that town in the evening, so as not to attract the notice of the enemy, who had a strong battery at Fort Wellington, opposite Ogdensburgh. The boats, also, were ordered to descend the river in the night, having only a sufficient number of men to row

them, with muffled oars. As the head of the column on its march rose the bank on the opposite side of the Oswegatche, their bright arms, glittering in the moonlight, disclosed them to the enemy. The battery of Fort Wellington opened on the column ; but the shower of shot and shell, being too elevated, passed over harmless and unheeded. The boats were less fortunate, suffering some, though slight damage. Fort Wellington being passed, the Commanding General directed Colonel Macomb to cross the St. Lawrence, and clear the Canadian bank of batteries or troops, which might obstruct the passage of the army down the river. About this time, Colonel Winfield Scott, of the 2d Regiment of Artillery, arrived at Macomb's position, and, stating that he was without a command, asked him for a place in his Corps d'elite. Macomb, always the friend of the chivalric Scott, offered him the command of the particular battalion of his own Regiment, which he had reserved for himself. Scott, with his usual alacrity whenever honour was to be courted, and whereever danger awaited him, readily accepted, and joined in the expedition. Macomb crossed with his Corps into Canada, removed the obstacles in his progress, and took possession of a small work called Fort Matilda.

The whole army now followed and pursued its march on the enemy's territory. The Elite was ordered to be-

come the advance. Brown's Brigade joining with it, it marched down to Cornwall. On the way a considerable body of militia, under a regular Colonel, at a place called Hoop-pole Creek, occupied a Block House on the right bank of the Creek, and a hill on the opposite side. On the approach to this place, they fired a few shot, and fled. They then opened a fire from the thickets; but, as soon as our artillery began to play, they fled again. The advance marched on till dark, when they encamped at Barnhart's, near Cornwall. The next day brought about the battle of Chrisler's Field.

It was a politic movement on the part of the British, when they found our Army pushing its progress down the St. Lawrence, in order to make a descent on Montreal, to detach parties to hang upon our rear and harrass our flanks. The delay on our part, occasioned by useless halts and complicated arrangements as to the order of march, enabled the British to collect their troops from Kingston and other points along the river, and to press upon our movements. They watched their opportunity to fall upon our rear, in the hope, probably, of causing the army to retrograde, if not to bring on a general action—thus to gain time to strengthen the defences of Montreal, and to concentrate at that post from below all their disposable troops for the pur-

pose of meeting our attack. With this view, Captain Mulcaster of the British Navy, with nine or ten gun-boats, carrying heavy pieces of ordnance, had been sent in pursuit; and Colonel Morrison of their Army, with the land forces at his command, was intrusted with the conduct of the expedition. Our Army unfortunately halted to oppose him—first by small detachments—then by a considerable portion of the whole force—until the main body became retarded, and, in some degree, engaged in the conflict. The opposing parties were about equal in number. The British, however, had the advantage of position; and were attacked under circumstances most unpropitious to us. Their line extended from the river to the woods—their right resting on the St. Lawrence, covered by the gun-boats under Captain Mulcaster—their left extending to the woods, protected by numerous bands of Savages and Militia—and their front fortified by a strong log fence, behind which they formed for action. Our troops attacked them bravely, but unskilfully. Avoiding their fortified front, our whole force should have been brought to bear upon their left flank, which being turned, their gun-boats would have been rendered inoperative—we should have obtained possession of the woods—and they, in the open field, would have been exposed to our fire, the distance between the woods and river being within

the range of musketry. After a hard-fought action, in which gallant feats were performed on either side, the firing was mutually suspended. Here our impetuous General Boyd, of romantic enthusiasm and patriotic fire, displayed his wonted spirit of audacious ambition which laughed at obstacles, and coveted perils as a pastime; and here the estimable Covington breathed out his last. Colonel Macomb, being in the advance, could not participate in this affair; but succeeded to the command of Covington's Brigade. The Americans at night slept on the battle-ground; and the next day continued their march. The British gave up the pursuit. The season being considered too far advanced for the troops to remain longer in the field, they recrossed the St. Lawrence, and went into winter quarters at French Mills on the Salmon River, the 13th November, 1813.

Thus terminated this campaign, which, however well matured, was, from defective execution, so disastrous and discreditable in its results. It is not the part of this memoir to discuss its merits; but it is an act of justice to history and to Wilkinson to state, that a misunderstanding existed between him and General Hampton—the former charging the latter with disobedience of orders and consequent responsibility for the failure of the enterprise.

In the preceding September, General John Armstrong, the Secretary of War, had come on to Sackett's Harbour, personally to inspect, personally to direct, the department of war in that sphere of its then most vital operations. He conceived and delineated the campaign of 1813, which, if executed with the ability with which it was planned, would probably have placed its originator in the executive chair of these States. In the general conduct of the department and, especially, of the Army, he created a new spirit. He increased the efficiency of the latter, by throwing aside its cumbersome lumber of ignorance, stupidity, and dissipation. Though himself of undaunted valour, and capable of skilful and profound combinations, yet he had to depend on imperfect instrumentality; and, from want of experience, was greater in the theory than in the practice of war. His pen, perhaps, is his *forte*. This alone is terrible, "as an army with banners." The pen is the author's sword—and his is a Damascus blade, of finest temper, with ground edge, and polished point. His is not the Ciceronian flow, but the Demosthenian force—not the effulgence of Burke nor the majesty of Johnson, but the raciness and poignancy of Junius and Juvenal.

The ensuing December, General Wilkinson despatched Colonel Macomb from Milone with a flag of truce to the Head Quarters of Sir George Provost, bear-

ing a communication relative to hostages. He was not permitted to proceed further than Chateaugay, where he was conducted to the Quarters of General De Waltenville; and, after the despatch was read by Sir George, he was reconducted out of the country by the way of St. John's and St. Armand's, and thence was obliged to go by Burlington before he could return to Melone. This route was prescribed, no doubt, with a view to prevent Macomb from acquiring any intelligence of the country, and to gain time, that winter might set in, before Wilkinson could have another chance to operate against Sir George.

Macomb resumed the command of the Artillery, and continued in it until the 24th of January, 1814, when he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General, and assigned to the Brigade of the late Covington, composed of the 9th Regiment under Aspinwall, of the 16th under Pierce, and the 25th under Gaines. The campaign having closed in a manner so unsatisfactory to the Government and Nation, orders were given by the War Department to break up the quarters at French Mills, and for the Army to retire to Sackett's Harbour, Plattsburgh, and Burlington, where barracks had been provided. Wilkinson removed his head quarters to Plattsburgh. Brigadier General Macomb conducted the troops destined to that place, and Major General Brown

the other division to Sackett's Harbour. Macomb was then appointed to the command of the troops on the East side of Lake Champlain, and took up his quarters at Burlington. To guard against the smuggling carried on along the lines, Macomb was ordered to detach Colonel Isaac Clarke with his Regiment: He was afterward instructed to proceed with his command and take possession of the town of St. Armand. As there was no force in that quarter, except the local militia, the place made no resistance. Macomb now received orders to join Wilkinson at Champlain, a village on the frontiers of New-York. He forthwith marched his Brigade, with four pieces of Artillery, to that place. The season being far advanced, Wilkinson designed, as soon as he had collected the troops from Plattsburgh, to attack La Cole Mills, a fortified position on the St. John's, and also carry the outposts in its vicinity, in order to bring on a general action. Having received an intimation that he would be relieved in the command of the Northern Army the ensuing spring, Wilkinson was desirous, by the present enterprise, to retrieve his military reputation, to cover the disappointment of the campaign on the St. Lawrence, and secure the popular favour against the manifest displeasure of the War Department. The time, unfortunately selected, was too late in the winter, and too early in the spring.

Macomb objected to the plan of engaging the whole force, amounting to about 4000 effective soldiers, in such an affair—the opposing garrison consisting probably of not more than 200 or 300 men at most; but he recommended that one Brigade should make the attack on the Fort, or, with hot shot, set fire to the roof and burn out the garrison. The rest of the force might move forward to render any assistance, should it be found necessary; but it was evident, from the depth of the snow, the condition of the roads, and the impenetrable character of the surrounding woods, that a large force could not operate so promptly, nor be so well directed, as a smaller body of men. It was, however, an object on which General Wilkinson's mind was bent. A council of war was called; and, after much consultation, they reluctantly yielded to his desires. The attack was made on the 30th of March, 1814. The event verified Macomb's prediction, being completely abortive. In this affair, Macomb commanded the Reserve. The conduct of our troops was highly evincive of their discipline and firmness; and the British Commander also signalized himself by a gallant defence of his position.

Our troops returned to their old quarters at Plattsburgh and Burlington, leaving a piquet at Champlain. Wilkinson, as had been expected, was recalled, and

Macomb was ordered to assume the command, until the arrival of Major General Izard, who had been nominated as the successor of Wilkinson. Brigadier General Macomb established his head quarters at Plattsburgh, and assiduously employed himself in putting the troops in order for the next campaign. On his relieving General Wilkinson, he ordered an officer of the Engineers to proceed to Otter Creek, with instructions to erect a battery for the protection of the avenue leading to the dockyards, where M'Donough was preparing his fleet. General Izard, by and by, arrived and took the command, when Macomb removed his quarters to his old position in Burlington. While in the chief command of the Army on this station, Macomb afforded Commodore M'Donough every assistance in his power, ordered a Regiment to guard his sloops at Virgennes, and furnished him men enough to supply the deficiencies in his crews, who were to act either as sailors or as marines.

The British flotilla at the Isle aux Noix, on the 9th of May, entered Lake Champlain, with a large detachment of marines, for the purpose of capturing or destroying the vessels recently launched at Vergennes, or of intercepting the stores and supplies intended for their equipment and armament; the British Commander knowing that M'Donough was then in no condition to

oppose him. The enemy appeared off Plattsburgh, fired on the piquet at Appletree Point, and then steered up the lake. On seeing the course which the flotilla had taken, General Macomb ordered the Light Artillery under Captain Thomton, with the necessary transportation, to proceed to Otter Creek, in order to man the batteries which he had previously caused to be constructed for the defence of our naval depot. Captain Thomton was quickly supplied with transports, by that active Quarter Master Major Staunton, and reached his destination at one o'clock the next morning. He had just time to make his arrangements for the reception of the British flotilla, which, at dawn of day, commenced the attack in expectation of but a slender resistance. The flotilla, consisting of one brig of 18 guns and 13 galleys carrying 16 heavy guns, found themselves, however, so severely handled, that they judged it expedient to abandon the enterprise, and return to the Isle aux Noix. Thus, by his coup d'œil, vigilance, and foresight, Macomb anticipated the designs of the enemy, and effectually frustrated a well-concerted plan to destroy our incipient Navy on Lake Champlain—by this single act making himself auxiliary to the future triumph of the Navy on our Lakes, and entitling himself to the nation's lasting gratitude.

The Governor General of Canada having early in

the summer of 1814 reinforced his frontier on the Niagara with a considerable body of fresh troops, the position of General Brown became exceedingly critical. General Izard, who had now collected a handsome force on the Champlain frontier, could not brook the idea of inactivity. He pointed out to the War Department the advantage which would result from, and solicited the privilege of, marching his best troops to the relief of General Brown; leaving the residue for the protection of Plattsburgh. The orders granted on the application of General Izard, he did not receive until late in August. Meanwhile, the Champlain frontier had assumed an entirely new aspect. The highly disciplined and veteran troops of Wellington from France and the Peninsula were pouring into Canada, and concentrating under Sir George Provost between La Prairie and Chambly—Lieut. Gen. Baron de Rottenberg having the immediate command there. Indeed a heavy detachment under Major Gen. Sir Thomas Brisbane had already advanced nearly as far as Odletown, within 8 or 10 miles of Izard's Head Quarters. Izard's command at this time, consisted of Macomb's, Smith's, and Bissel's Brigades, amounting in all to about 5000 effective soldiers. Notwithstanding this change in the relative position of the frontiers, Izard felt himself invested with no discretionary authority to rescind or modify

the orders under which he was called to act. On the 27th of August, therefore, he marched for Niagara, leaving Macomb in command of about 2500 men, the remnants of a variety of regiments scattered in different directions, of which only about eighteen hundred were fit for duty. Although it was currently believed that the force collected by Sir George between La Prairie and Chambly was large, yet none, at first, formed an adequate conception of its extent. It was afterward ascertained that the troops which arrived from the Garonne amounted to 16,000 picked soldiers, commanded by some of the most approved Generals, in the British service. Of this number, 2000 were detached for the Niagara under General Kempt, and were replaced by the Voltigeurs and other Canadian Corps.

Learning that Izard had marched with so large a portion of his troops to reinforce the army at Fort Erie, Sir George, in order to check that movement, put his own army in motion, and crossed the lines at Odletown on the 1st of September. Here Macomb, left as it were alone, with only a handful of men, was put to the utmost stretch of his ability how to meet the occasion. It was one of those turning points in the character and fortune of individual history, when the weak sink, buried beneath the pressing magnitude of the emergency; but where the great more greatly rise, repercussive vi-

gour, educing resources from barren fortune, and vindicating the supremacy of genius by the title of nature's law. With such feeble means against overwhelming power; with, in a great degree, the destiny of his country in his hand; he stood, like Leonidas at the Defile, in a crisis of the most fearful responsibilities, from which ordinary men would instinctively have shrunk, but which the glorious covet. How he acquitted himself of this momentous trust, the event has demonstrated to the admiration of his own country, of the world, and of posterity.

The troops actually on the Champlain frontier, on the 1st of September, consisted only of one hundred and ten Riflemen. The 6th and 29th Regiments, amounting to about 750 men, Macomb had previously ordered to Plattsburgh, whither he determined to converge his whole command, as the point, in his judgment, best adapted for the repulsion of the enemy, for the defence of the large military stores on that station, and the incidental protection of our fleet. There had been commenced, under the direction of that laborious and scientific officer Major Totten of the Engineers, three Redoubts on the South side of the Saranac, a small river that runs through the town and discharges itself into Lake Champlain. In its winding course through the town, it forms a peninsula of the tongue of land which

lies between it and the Lake, the gorge or neck of the peninsula being about 400 yards across. It was on the gorge that the fortifications were being erected, consisting of three detached works so disposed as to flank and defend each other on any assailable side. Two of the works, one resting on the Saranac, the other on the Lake, were deemed inaccessible on their water fronts, from the height and precipitancy of the banks. On all other sides these works were surrounded by wide and deep ditches, defended by *caponnieres;* and the *glacis* were covered with multiplied rows of *abatis* constructed of trees well secured in the ground, the branches sharpened so as to stand out like so many bayonets. There were, besides, two block-houses mounted with cannon, and advantageously posted to guard the river and the ravines on the north side leading to the redoubts. The troops, with all despatch, were organized both for the completion and defence of the several works. Working parties were detailed, with orders to execute the instructions of the Engineers. The principal fort had been called by General Izard, Fort Moreau; and Macomb, in compliment to our gallant countrymen Brown and Scott, both of whom had just distinguished themselves on the Niagara, named that on the Saranac *Fort Brown*, and that on the Lake *Fort Scott.* He afterward erected another redoubt, more in advance, on

the south side, and gave it the name of *Fort Gaines*, after another of our distinguished Generals. Having assigned the artillery to the batteries in the several redoubts, he formed, out of the residue of his force, four small corps of observation, placing 250 men under Major Wool of the 29th, 200 under Major Sproul of the 13th, 100 armed with rifles under Captain Grosvenor of the 26th, and 110 riflemen under Lieut. Col. Appling. Appling's command was posted on the Great Chazy to watch the movements of the enemy, and give information. Beside these, there were a number of young men of Plattsburgh who organized themselves into a little company of about 30, under Aikin and Flagg, the latter of whom is now Secretary of State for the State of New-York, and is worthy of his promotion; and also a detachment of 12 dragoons, who occasionally served as videts, and escorted the General in his recognoisances. The light troops were now sent out on the various avenues of approach, to watch the motions of the enemy, to dispute the passes, obstruct the roads, destroy the bridges, and abatis the woods by felling the trees.

The next measure was an appeal to the Militia. Not being officially authorized to call for drafts, Macomb addressed himself, by public appeals, to the patriotism and valour of the citizens of New-York and Vermont,

particularly of the Governors of those States, and the Generals of Militia in his immediate neighbourhood. His call was promptly responded to. General Moores, commanding the Militia in the northern part of the State of New-York, displayed much zeal on the occasion. Experienced as a regular officer of the Revolution, and popular from his personal merits, his counsel and influence were highly appreciated by Macomb. He now held a consultation with the Commander of our Squadron on the Lake, and concerted with him, in perfect unison of feeling and action, a plan of mutual co-operation, as far as was practicable. A reciprocal esteem and confidence, instead of an envious rivalship and professional jealousy, between our land and naval Commanders, in this national exigency, fortunately for the honour of our arms, fortunately for the safety of our country, uniformly prevailed. Out of his very limited force, though to his own most imminent hazard, Macomb supplied M'Donough with 310 men, without which it would have been difficult, if not impossible, for M'Donough to manœuvre his Squadron, or keep the Lake. With Macomb the paramount motive is always his public duty. On all his actions he legibly inscribes his motto, "My Country." In his eye, the success, alike of the army or the fleet, was the triumph of a common cause. How few Commanders, in similar

circumstances, could have exhibited the same signal example of disinterestedness—the same spirit of heroic self-sacrifice—of a patriotism superior even to the love of glory—preferring the consciousness of the highest virtue before the statue and the column which embody the conqueror's fame !

While the British lay at Odletown, trusting in the superiority of their numbers, they permitted their camp to be open to any American citizen who chose to enter it ; yet it was difficult to ascertain their real strength. By some it was estimated at 10,000; by others at 20,000 ; and by others again as high as 25,000. By actual returns, which afterward fell into the hands of the American Commander, it is known that the force, with which they marched upon Plattsburgh, amounted to 14,000 effective regular soldiers, besides 2000 who were left as a reserve, to keep up the communication with Canada, and to prevent any American force from crossing over from Vermont to assail them in their rear. Such was their confidence of victory, that a body of merchants accompanied the expedition, with a view of disposing of their goods in the *conquered parts* of the United States. The news of the capture of our national Capital, about this time, was received at Plattsburgh. Macomb knowing that it would soon reach the British Camp, seized the opportunity of sending to

Major General Sir Thomas Brisbane, commanding the British advance, an intelligent officer, bearing a flag, with his compliments and the newspapers of the day, together with an extra containing an account of the capture. By this means he expected not only to learn, with more accuracy, the position and strength of the enemy; but also to convince them, that he viewed the affair of Washington, as a mere ordinary occurrence of war, and not as a disheartening augury of further defeat.

Frequent importunities from highly respectable sources were addressed to Macomb, urging him to retire, and thereby save his small band, the town of Plattsburgh, and the public stores which could be easily and safely sent up the Lake. They represented that the country in his rear was open, and that, in such circumstances, before such fearful odds, not only would a retreat be not dishonourable; but to remain would be a wanton sacrifice of lives and property. These importunities he had to silence, while the *real* difficulties of the occasion were sufficiently girding. Suppose he had yielded to those repeated and powerful solicitations, as, in a military point of view, he would have been justified, and was, perhaps, even required to do! Suppose, in consequence, Sir George had triumphantly entered our country! Suppose the news of his progress had annulled the negociations at Ghent, and continued the country in

war, *with an exhausted treasury, a prostrate credit, and disaffection in a great mass of the people!* What the consequences? What the services of him who averted them? But, away, away, with suppositions of disaster! The decision, which Macomb *unhesitatingly* took, and *unflinchingly* maintained, in that appalling situation, even his enemies, if he have any, must acknowledge, as an illustration, than which all history presents not a brighter, of the highest sublimity of moral courage.

On the 3d of September, the whole British army entered the town of Champlain. The small detachment of riflemen under Lieut. Col. Appling still remained on the Great Chazy, watching the movements of Sir George. It now became necessary to advance the militia and light corps on the road which he was taking. They were directed to avail themselves of the obstacles which had been by previous instructions, or might be, by their own exertions, thrown in the enemy's way—the broken bridges, fallen trees, and passes of chevaux de frise and abatis—and *to dispute the ground inch by inch:* for every hour's delay was now of consequence, as every hour gave additional strength to the yet rising parapets and unfinished battlements. Whether or not these precautionary obstructions had their desired effect of impeding the progress of Sir

George, or to whatever cause it may be ascribed, his delay was alike disastrous to the British arms, and glorious in its effects to the American cause.

On the 4th, the Governor General moved forward upon Plattsburgh. Appling with his riflemen fell back slowly, pulling down the bridges on his retreat, and obstructing the pursuit by throwing into the road large trees with their branches pointing to the enemy. Sir George halted at the village of Little Chazy, and continued there the whole of the 5th. It was ascertained, that, the next day at dawn, he would advance in two columns on the two roads, dividing at Sampson's a little above Chazy. The militia of New-York, amounting to about 700 men under General Wright, and a detachment of regulars of 280 men under Major Wool, the present Inspector General, supported by two pieces of Light Artillery, were pushed forward to check the right column, consisting of the Divisions of Major Generals Power and Robinson, which was to take the Beekmantown road; and were instructed, like Appling, to interpose every impediment in their power. Appling was directed to retire on the Lake road, as better suited to his arm, being more difficult than the other, on account of the lowness of the grounds and the thickness of the woods: besides, on this road a detachment of 200 men under Major Sproul of the 13th, supported also by two

field pieces, had been previously stationed at the bridge of Dead Creek, which force was to co-operate with Appling's riflemen in defending that pass. The position at this Creek was, from its natural advantages, strongly defensible. Aware of the fact, Major General Sir Thomas Brisbane, to avoid the pass, cut a road round it through the woods on the west, but the column on the Beekmantown road having advanced so much more rapidly than the other, it was found necessary to withdraw the force at the Creek, in order to secure its retreat. It so happened, however, that just as this party had retired about half a mile, the advance of the left column of the enemy under Colonel Sir William Williams had penetrated through the woods, and meeting Appling, the latter gave them a sharp fire from his riflemen, and retired agreeably to his instructions. The detachments sent out to oppose the right column were also obliged to retire, but not without having made a good impression. The militia, unaccustomed to regular discipline and service, hurried their march; but the regulars under Wool fell back in good order, keeping up a fire from every favourable position, until they met with Appling and Sproul, when the whole retired, by alternate detachments, until they were forced across the bridge of the Saranac.

Early in the morning of that day, Macomb advanced

with his Staff, on the Beekmantown road, to direct operations on that route, and afterwards took his post at the junction of the roads leading into Plattsburgh, in order the better to conduct the movements of his retiring corps. The gun-boats on the Lake were stationed at the flats, so as to take the enemy in flank, as he moved along the Lake shore with his left column; but the wind rising, and the enemy's pieces being soon brought to bear on them, they were constrained to resume their place in line of battle with the squadron; not, however, without effecting considerable annoyance. The American troops having now retired behind the Saranac, the planks of the bridges were taken up, and so disposed as to shelter the detachments posted behind them. The enemy entered the town; but, finding themselves too much exposed to the field pieces and heavy batteries, withdrew out of reach of our guns, leaving some light troops to skirmish at the head of the bridges and fords, while their Engineer and Staff officers mounted the roofs and balconies of the town, to reconnoitre our position. Being there discovered by our telescopes, hot shot was poured, like burning lava, upon the buildings, and soon dispossessed these gentlemen of their new observatories. It was an object of importance to keep them at the greatest possible distance; and our troops, being fairly driven into close

quarters, were driven likewise to the necessity of redoubling their efforts to strengthen the works, which were destined to be the last resort. Every exertion of the mind and body was put forth to amuse and deceive the enemy. The whole of our troops were paraded at each guard-mounting, to produce an impression that the strength of the garrison was much greater than it really was. Every night some portion of the barracks, which had been constructed for Izard's army, was burnt, to enable any approach of the enemy's troops to be discovered on the glacis, should they, by passing through the woods at night, escape the vigilance of our piquets and other guards. By the same means, an opportunity was afforded of marching our troops through the light, giving an appearance as if reinforcements were being received from the opposite side of the Lake. The weather for the most part was rainy. One third of our troops, notwithstanding, lined the parapets at night, while the rest lay on their arms without covering. The enemy's camp described a segment of a circle, with a radius of about two miles from our forts; their right resting on the Saranac; and their left on the Lake, covered by a battery to keep off our gunboats. From the 6th to the night of the 10th, the enemy were industriously engaged in planting their open and masked batteries, in preparing scaling ladders,

in reconnoisances, and in sallies. In one of their abortive attempts to pass the upper fords above the town, when about half of a formidable detachment had crossed over, and were forming again in line and column, with horse and foot, our light corps, regular and irregular, dispersed among the fronting woods; and, concealed behind the trees, set up a simultaneous shout and thundering huzzas, so that the enemy thought himself, as the event proved he was, caught in a ruse de guerre—became panic-stricken—broke into confusion—and recrossed the ford in the utmost precipitancy—making fine game for the huntsmen in his rear. He was now said to be waiting only the arrival of his fleet, which was expected about the 10th or 11th.

From the position which the enemy had taken, and from his line of contravallation, there presented themselves to Macomb's view several enterprises which, in his opinion, might be undertaken without imminent danger, and yet with eminent advantage. Among these was an attack which he had projected upon the enemy's Head Quarters, which were in the centre of their line—proposing to take, in the way, a battery then nearly completed, within 400 yards of Fort Brown, and in a direct line to Sir George. For this purpose he had prepared a brigade of rocketeers, with Congreve rockets, which the enemy believed to be in his own exclu-

sive possession—and two hundred light troops under Major Sproul—to sally, in the dead of night, in a direct line to the point of attack—force the guards, in their way—bring on an action by pouring a fire of small arms upon the centre—and then discharge the rocket battery in their retreat. By this manœuvre, it was expected that the enemy would get under arms—his several corps march to the relief of the centre—and, in the darkness, surprise, and confusion of the moment, bring on a general conflict till morning. In the mean time the American party would have retreated on our works, under the disguise of the Congreve rockets, and by the signal-lights previously arranged for their guidance. This plan Macomb conceived to be the more practicable, as the soldiers of the different British regiments were strangers to each other, some of them not even speaking the English language. But, on consulting with the principal officer of Engineers, who thought that the strength of the American force would not justify the risk of losing so many men, as would compose the attacking party, Macomb relinquished the design. In consequence, only fifty men were detailed under Captain M'Glassin, who, in the sortie, gallantly carried the battery near Fort Brown, spiked the guns, and demolished the works.

While the enemy were sitting down before the Ame-

rican works, these were put in as good a state of defence as time permitted, and indefatigable labour could effect. The batteries of the three principal forts, and of the redoubts, were served with signal vigour, science, and effect. That our artillery, in its several stations, did skilful and powerful execution, was testified by the General, in his orders of the day, and by the subsequent acknowledgment of the enemy.

Under the impression, that the enemy could not carry the works by assault, nor yet reduce them by siege under 10 or 12 days, and then only provided the attack were made on the South front, where they would have ground to move on, and to open trenches in a regular manner, Macomb felt an entire confidence that, before so many days could elapse, if the occasion should require, the country every where would rush to the rescue of his little band of American Spartans, at the straits of this modern Thermopolæ: at all events, honour and patriotism spoke but one voice, and he obeyed it.

The volunteer Green Mountain Boys, and the Militia of New-York, continued to pour in. It was a great point of policy to employ, to the greatest advantage, these patriotic but inexperienced troops. The General took them to the magazines where he personally delivered them arms and ammunition. He addressed them, thanking them for the spirit they had manifested

by coming to his relief, when opposed by such powerful hosts. He advised them not to think of forming into large parties; but to choose their leaders and act in small, separate bands; to fall on the enemy at any point, and attack his piquets and out-posts, night and day, giving him no rest; to harass him in his rear and flanks, pick up stragglers, and get every information of his designs; never to oppose a regular attack, but to retire as the enemy advanced, and advance as he retired. He then informed them that provisions and ammunition would be deposited for them at certain points, to which they could resort when in want of a supply. He particularly requested them to keep away from the forts, but yet to close on the enemy, should he advance to the attack of the works; and to lie along the river and in the woods to prevent his crossing at the upper fords. Among these volunteers was General Strong, who held influence with his patriotic countrymen, and proved himself worthy of their reliance. On his introduction, Macomb gave him a short, but kind salutation, and, plucking an Evergreen that stood by, presented it to Strong, begging him to assume it, for himself and corps, as an emblem of their Green Mountains, and perennial valour. The directions given to the Volunteers and Militia, fortunately, were respectfully received, and faithfully complied with,

Every day the light parties of Regulars, and Militia, and Volunteers, were more or less engaged in skirmishes; while the artillery was constantly and successfully playing upon the new works being erected by the enemy, until the 11th. The day before, Macomb had been informed by his spies that the British Commander had determined on a general attack—that the storming parties were detailed, and 1200 ladders provided. From his situation and the nature of the troops which came to his assistance, Macomb was aware that he was surrounded by spies in the British interest, who took the garb of militiamen; and from the manner in which he was watched, and his conversation listened to, by certain suspicious fellows, he availed himself of their instrumentality to deceive their masters, by letting them understand, as if he thought them militiamen and wished to encourage them, that General Izard's army was at hand, waiting only the crossing of the British army to move up and attack it, and that there were now more than 10,000 militia in the woods, and that double the number would join them by the next day. These fellows, at night, were seen to pass over the Saranac into the enemy's camp, carrying, no doubt, the inspiring intelligence, with which Macomb had filled them.

From the number of batteaux, which were in the

Quarter Master's Department at Plattsburgh, Macomb conceived the idea, in the event of the capture of our fleet, not only of retaking it, but also of capturing that of the enemy. He reasoned that, if the Americans practiced their usual precision of fire, however the decision of the battle might turn, the hostile squadron would be greatly crippled, and, after the action, would be in such a state of confusion, fatigue, intoxication, negligence, and general disability, as to become an easy conquest. He, therefore, ordered the batteaux to be arranged under the banks of the Lake and prepared, in such a contingency, to receive 6 or 800 men, with which the General would embark and board the fleets. The actual situation of the squadron, at the close of the engagement, confirmed the feasibility of the project. An enterprise, like this, was worthy of the fearless soul of Macomb to conceive, and of his unconquered arm to execute.

As another instance of the interest he took in our naval honour on the Lakes, scarcely second to that which he took in his own command, Macomb planted on Crab Island a battery of two twelve pounders, served by the invalids of the Hospital, under Surgeon Mann, to protect the left flank of our Squadron. In the attack, the British galleys, destined to turn that flank, were beaten off; and a sloop of war, of ten guns, leading

them, was driven on the rocks, and compelled to surrender.

Knowing that the meditated attack would certainly be made, if made at all, on the south front of the fortifications, Macomb at night, after the departure of the spies, caused all the roads leading to the works to be planted with evergreens, such as pines which prevailed there; and directed the fallen leaves to be strewed over the naked ground so as to disguise any appearance of a road. He at the same time caused other roads to be opened, all leading into an old road that ran to Salmon River. On this road, a field piece was stationed under Lieutenant Sumter, a gallant officer of the Light Artillery, with directions to await the coming of the enemy. The volunteers and militia were advised to keep on the west side of the road, if the enemy should drive them from the banks of the river, and to maintain a constant fire, whether the enemy was near or not,—their main object being to lead him astray, confuse, and embarrass him.

On the 11th, at break of day, a general movement was discovered in the enemy's camp, all the different corps being under arms. Soon afterward the British fleet hove in sight off Cumberland Head, fired a salute in passing, and at 8 o'clock, displayed the royal flag in Plattsburgh bay. The batteries on land and lake

opened at the same instant; and a general cannonade and bombardment were kept up, in the dread conflict of army with army, and fleet with fleet: 'twas a magnificent spectacle, a splendid drama, especially as the scene of action was laid in the interior, mid our inland oceans. The sky was filled with bombs and shells, rockets and balls, the lightning and thunder of human power—it seemed as if the elements of nature were convulsed. The British troops moved forward toward the American works, and made a demonstration before the bridges, with a view to amuse, while the assaulting columns should pass in what the enemy considered our rear, but which was actually our front, as the river protected us on the north side, which had thus far been the point exposed to their attacks. As was anticipated, the plan of the false roads completely deceived the assailing parties, and they marched five miles out of their way, until they met the field piece under Lieut. Sumter, who gave them an unexpected fire. Through their march, they were also handled very roughly by the volunteers and militia; and, being fatigued after marching so far with their clumsey scaling-ladders made out of horse-racks picked up in their neighbourhood, and involved in the mazes of the woods which seemed interminable and inextricable, and which now thronged with sharp shooters, they threw down their

ladders, and precipitately retreated, leaving a handsome company of the British 76th, which formed the advance guard, to be cut up and captured, not an officer or man escaping. Mean while, the action on the Lake had been decided, it lasting only two hours; and the firing between the armies closed at sunset.

All was now calm and quiet—the sky was serene—and the intermingled cry of the sentinels of the hostile armies, on the ramparts and along the line, alone broke the portentous silence. It was just at the moment when the attack was expected—every man at his post anxiously awaiting the foe—when the rumbling of carriage-wheels upon the hard-beaten roads indicated a movement in the hostile camp.

At this juncture, some deserters were brought in, who declared that the Army of Sir George Provost *was on the Retreat*. It was impossible to believe such a statement—impossible to believe that he would retreat at all—but that he would retreat in the night, before a handful of men, and without making a full trial of his strength, was most of all incredible. The next morning, however, brought confirmation of the fact. Incredulity yielded only to the evidence of the senses. Scattered equipage, broken carriages, abandoned baggage-wagons, deserted magazines, and straggling plunderers, alone, marked the field, where so lately waved,

in proud defiance, the ensigns of a thousand victories, the time-honoured banner of the House of Brunswick! The wounded were left in hospital, in charge of a surgeon having a note from Sir George recommending them to the humanity of the conqueror. The light troops were sent in pursuit. Deserters came in by platoons; and prisoners were made in all directions. But a violent storm now setting in induced the General to recall his troops. Thus ended the siege and attack of Plattsburgh, during which the loss of the Americans in killed and wounded was too inconsiderable to be mentioned. The Governor General of the Canadas, with 16,000 veteran *Invincibles* of Wellington—with soldiers who had conquered the conqueror of Europe, and won, in many an ensanguined field, the trophies of imperishable fame—now abandoned the attempted conquest and division of these United States, by a systematic co-operation of land and naval forces concerted in the cabinet councils of his Britannic Majesty;—and retired into Canada, before 1500 regular Yankee troops and their voluntary comrades of the Militia!

As matter of instruction, and also of curiosity, it may be worth while to inquire into the cause of the phenomenon of this retreat. It could not be in our vast inferiority of discipline and numbers. It could not be in the mighty phalanx of the British forces. It could

not be in the capture of the fleet: for that should have but provoked them to avenge the injury, and merge the disgrace in the blaze of their own glory. What then was it? It was the ascendant genius, the exhaustless resources, sleepless vigilance, invincible fortitude, the practiced skill, the matured science, of the American Commander. He employed the whole *stratagie of war*. He foiled them in all their incipient attempts. He lead them off from the point of attack by the *ruse* of the roads—involved them in the labyrinth of woods swarming with marksmen—surprised them by ambush—cut them off by detachments—destroyed their batteries by sorties in the night—filled them with terror, through their own spies, at the expectation of his strong reinforcements at hand—induced them to believe, by the repeated cheerings of the soldiers on the battlements, by his manner of mounting the guards, and by parading the troops through the nocturnal light of burning buildings, in the unreal strength of his garrisons—and taught them, by the exhibition of every faculty and resource which the science and art of war can know or practice; by the daring spirit of his enterprise, indomitable energy, and successful hardihood, that American Republicans, in the cause of Freedom and their Country, are not to be cheaply conquered!'

General Macomb now dismissed the volunteers and militia, with his grateful acknowledgments of their services, in his own name and in that of the country and the government. They returned to their homes, with the feelings of men, citizens and patriots, conscious of having done their duty in a sacred cause. They were welcomed by their families: the public prints applauded them: and the country, in every section of their residence, delighted to reward them with proofs of popular confidence. Their respective States were proud of their achievements: and a stimulus has thus been provided, by their example, for citizen soldiers to rally around the eagle-bearing Standard of their country, should that signal of honour, in any future exigency, be again unfurled. The papers every where in the United States teemed with merited eulogy of the Defence of Plattsburgh. The Legislatures of the several states passed resolves of thanks to the officers and men; and General Macomb was noticed with especial commendation, particularly by his own State and the State of Vermont. The State of New-York complimented him with a superb sword, presented by Governor Tompkins; and the city of New-York gave him its freedom in a gold box, presented by its Mayor De Witt Clinton; it also requested him to sit for his portrait, to be placed in its gallery of distinguished patriots. Nor was the national

legislature unmindful of the great debt of gratitude which the country owed him. Congress passed a vote expressive of their sense of his services, and directed that a gold medal should be struck, emblematical of his triumph at Plattsburgh, to be presented by the President of the United States. The President also conferred on Macomb the rank of Major General by Brevet, the commission bearing date on the day of the victory.

Such was the anxiety manifested in England for the result of the gigantic enterprise thus defeated, that the gazettes of London had already proclaimed the successful invasion of New-York, and the capture of Plattsburgh. The British Commissioners at Ghent were looking, with sanguine confidence, for the official accounts of the progress of the British Arms, in America, expecting to stand in an attitude for dictating to our Envoys the conditions of peace. The London publications having flattered their hopes, by announcing a false issue to the contest, they heightened their demands, insisting on our recognition of the Indian Tribes as independent nations, and urging other pretexts and pretensions, to protract a pacification, until their receipt of authentic intelligence. What a disappointment! How the cup of their hopes was dashed from the lip! From their golden dreams, to what dis-

astrous reality they awakened! And the spell of this splendid enchantment broken, too, by a mere guard of Yankee Soldiers, and a hasty collection of patriotic yeomanry, who hold in fee the soil they till! The affair of Plattsburgh, auspiciously for our honour and interests, closed the negociations at Ghent, and set the seal to the Treaty of Peace. Our General in Chief, Alexander Macomb, may, therefore, brightly wear, as he has nobly won, both the civic crown and the laurel wreath.

General Macomb still remained in command of Plattsburgh and the adjacent country. The commencement of the war upon the Borders was attended with many vexatious occurrences, owing to the inimical feelings which party spirit had infused, even into the military corps employed, on either side, in defence of the frontiers. The Regiments, which had been long quartered in Canada, viewed the national hostilities, rather as a civil commotion, than a regular war. Their contiguity to the United States, the discussions which they daily read in our newspapers, the identity of language, and, in many instances, of feeling and opinion, lead them imperceptibly into the belief, that they themselves were a party in our political contentions. They, therefore, with few exceptions, treated our officers, who fell into their hands, with no kind of respect; and,

when speaking of the Government, held language ill comporting with the character of men professing to belong to a high-minded nation. But the progress, which our troops were daily making in discipline and knowledge of warfare, began to teach them better lessons. After the affair of Plattsburgh, they manifested a higher respect than they were wont to do. The troops, however, who had served on the Continent of Europe under that Great Captain Wellington, had never evinced any such illiberality. The war, after their arrival, took a more *militaire* complexion. To relieve the inhabitants residing near the line, marked by the 45th degree of north latitude, constituting the frontier intrusted to General Macomb, from the vexations and sufferings to which they were exposed under the former system pursued by the British Commanders, an arrangement was entered into, between him and General Sir Thomas Brisbane, to allow the inhabitants, on either side, an uninterrupted pursuit of their peaceful occupations, to cross the lines, and, in fact, to enjoy all the privileges of neutrals, so long as they remained non-combatant. An habitual courtesy was, also, practiced between the piquets and out-posts of the respective armies and in the intercourse of the officers, which calls up, for a moment, as a vision flits across the mind, our treasured recollections of the age of Chivalry and Romance, when

the ferocities of war were softened into shade; and the bleeding wounds of a captive, slain by his foe, were quenched by the ministering hand of that foe, converted to a friend—and when the high deeds of heroism were prompted, ennobled, and endeared, by the kindliest sympathies, the softest affections, and all the charities of humanity, mingled with the death-conflicts of rival prowess, and the loftiest aspirations of ambition.

On our lines, the barbarisms of shooting sentinels on post, and of individual affrays, a bad imitation of the Indian model of warfare, were now abolished. A little familiar incident occurred, to show the spirit which prevailed of mutual forbearance, conciliation, and good offices. A servant of a British Adjutant deserted to our side, with his master's horse, clothes, and money. On being brought to Head Quarters and examined, he confessed that all the articles were stolen. General Macomb immediately ordered off Lieutenant Riley with a flag to restore them. While in the act of re-delivering the property at the British camp, an American deserter arrived, with General Macomb's charger, fresh stolen from his stables. The charger being recognised by Lieutenant Riley was promptly given up, the British being pleased with an opportunity, so singularly presented, of reciprocating the courteous liberality extended to themselves.

Having adjusted matters on the Champlain frontier, General Macomb was permitted to return to the city of New-York, and to visit his family connexions at Belville in New-Jersey. On his way thither he was loaded with demonstrations of the public regard. But he had not long enjoyed the domestic circle, ere news was received of another attack on Plattsburgh being in preparation. He hastened back to his post. He had authority to call to his assistance all the disposable regular troops, east of New-York and Lake Champlain, and also the militia of the States of New-York and Vermont. From experience, General Macomb had found it preferable to call out the militia on the spur of the occasion, than to embody them for any length of time previously, as they suffer, both in health and spirits, by long absence from their comfortable homes and usual occupations. He had observed that they, especially the heads of families, were liable to a real malady, known to physicians by the name of *nostalgia*, which not only incapacitated them for service, but, in many cases, actually proved fatal. Beside these considerations, being ever mindful of the duty of public economy, he was unwilling to augment, unnecessarily, the expenses of the war. The winter was passed in expectation of a renewed attack. New detachments of regular troops arrived. They were improved in discipline,

and the works increased in strength. The cold was excessive; but the expectation of another visit from Sir George kept up the spirits of the troops, and made the winter pass cheerily off. On the receipt of the news in this country, that the preliminaries of Peace had been settled at Ghent, the President of the United States ordered a suspension of hostilities. Macomb conveyed this intelligence by a flag to Sir George; and the war terminated. Some of the principal officers of the British Army, on their way home, anxious to see the works before which they had been so lately repulsed, visited the American General and the forts under his command. They expressed their surprise at the skill and strength of their construction. The efficiency of our Artillery, too, during the late seige, had induced a belief among them, that our cannon had the rifle bore; and they obtained permission to inspect it, for the purpose of ascertaining the truth of their conjecture.

In the month of March, 1815, an order came for discharging all the troops who had enlisted to serve during the war. Those enlisted for the term of 5 years, who had any considerable time yet to serve, were directed to be mustered, with a view of forming the contemplated peace establishment; which was settled at 10,000 men, retaining two Major Generals and four Brigadiers. Macomb was selected to be one of the Briga-

diers, and stood at the head of that rank. Having discharged the troops who enlisted for the term of the war, and the inefficient, he repaired, on an order from the President, to the seat of Government, to assist as a member of a Board to organize the Peace establishment, in conformity to the act of Congress. A more painful duty never devolved on Macomb. Full of sympathy for distress in all its varied shapes, and emphatically the *Soldier's friend*, for him it was a task indeed, to cast adrift, upon the sea of life, men who should have been grappled to the land, which their blood had enriched, and their arm protected. The act of Congress contemplated a small, but efficient force; and, consequently, those honourable men, whom years, or infirmities, or wounds, rendered incapable of further service, in active warfare, were to be excluded. The duty, however painful, was necessarily performed; and the supernumerary officers were disbanded on the 17th of May, 1815. In the distribution of the commands, Macomb was assigned to the 3d military department in the Division of the North. He fixed his Head Quarters in the city of New-York, and organized the troops on that station.

About this time the Department of War devolved on William H. Crawford. Of such a man, introduced by the course of our narrative, a passing notice will be

deemed a pardonable digression. With the defective and deranged system of the Department, under all the embarrassments of a transition from war to peace, having new stations to designate, conflicting interests to reconcile, vast amounts of public stores and other property to preserve from waste and peculation, and to conform those habits, which the license of war had generated, to the strict rules of civil order and military obedience—in fine, having before him a chaotic mass to mould and fashion—he spoke order out of the confusion, established economy, created efficiency, transfused his own spirit into the breast of the Army, discarded imbecility and profligacy, fostered talent, rewarded meritorious conduct, preserved the harmony, and greatly promoted the respectability, of the service. He was not, however, sufficiently long in charge of this office, nor, under circumstances, to enable him *entirely* to arrange it anew, and stamp it with his signet. In his preceding and subsequent situations, in the Senate of the United States, in his foreign Embassy, and in the national Treasury, in his youth and in his manhood, with Herculean strength, he hewed out, and raised up, the granite pillars of his fame, and planted them on the foundations, deep and broad, of national prosperity and honour. He was a democrat; for he, like the Constitution of the United States, believed in

the power, virtue, and intelligence of the people, or, in other words, that the common sense of the people, guided by their own true interests, rightly understood, would be a valid check upon usurpers and demagogues. The chief authority of the State was, alone, fitted to afford ample scope for the demonstration of his immense capabilities. He was like the intellectual giants of antiquity. Acknowledged by great men to be the greatest of their number, he was the leader, by unanimous assent and instinctive impulse, of the most powerful party in this country, for talent, character, and republican principles. Characterized by his simplicity, that truest test alike of genius and of real greatness, and sanctified by the purity of his motives, he always forgot himself, when he thought of his country; *and his country was in all his thoughts.* Self-created, and self-poised, he looked around him through all men and things: he held them in the balance of his unerring judgment, and determined, to a scruple, their weight and value. He was master of human nature. His talents were *administrative.* His qualifications indicated that he was destined for the highest station. But heaven is veiled from us; and though its decrees pierce through the veil, the motives of them lie buried in the obscuring splendour of Omniscience. Crawford! Venerable, beloved name! When thy sun shall set, it will

retain its magnitude, leaving in its golden track a mellowed, but enduring radiance.

From the unsettled state of the Canadian frontier on the Lakes, and the restlessness of the Indians, Secretary Crawford, selecting General Macomb, directed him to remove his Head Quarters to Detroit, and take command of the 5th Military Department. Macomb's arrival at Detroit must have been one of the most flattering and gratifying incidents of his eventful life. After an absence of twenty-five years, a period of hardship and adventure, of toils and perils, he re-visits the place of his nativity, the scenes of his childhood. The boy, that was fondled in the soldier's arms, comes now among the companions of his youth a Major General of the triumphant American Army, covered with his country's and the world's applause, his breast decorated with the insignia of honour snatched at the cannon's mouth. The tales of fiction scarcely afford a more interesting plot or a happier *denouement.* On his return among them, he was received by all classes of the citizens with the strongest demonstrations of pleasure and delight—the French and American population vying with each other in respect for his character and services.

The duties, which now devolved on him, were of an arduous nature. The surrender of this post, at the

commencement of the war, threw open the whole Michigan Territory to the ravages of savage incursion. The ploughshare of desolation had passed over it—every farm laid waste—even the fences prostrated—not a fort or barrack remaining—the people suffering every distress: Detroit *was*. To resuscitate the town and adjacent country, and to protect the inhabitants, were the tasks which he now assumed and executed. He forthwith made such a disposition of his troops as effectually to incapacitate the savages from any serious molestation of the frontier settlers. He established the posts of Fort Gratiot, Chicago, Michilimackinac, Green Bay, and subsequently, those of Prairie du Chien, St. Peter's, and St. Mary's—retaining at Detroit a sufficient force to preserve tranquillity in its immediate vicinity. Having provided for defence, he turned his attention to improvements. He projected and constructed roads, erected barracks and arsenals, contributed his funds toward the building of public edifices, and lent every facility, as far as was compatible with his duty, in his public, and, as far as his means would authorize, in his private, capacity. The counsels, too, of experience and intelligence, in a new and rising section of country, which he freely offered, were not without their value. He had the satisfaction to see, during his command here, the Capital and the surrounding country spring up with

renovated vigour—the inhabitants returning—the population increasing—agriculture and commerce flourishing —and the embryo State advancing, with rapid strides, in improvements of every kind. That his own agency had been eminently conducive to this prosperity must have been a reflexion that carried with it a proud and happy consciousness. The Territory, as a token of its gratitude, gave the name of Macomb to one of its counties.

He continued in command of this station, until the reduction of the Army, in June, 1821, when he was placed at the Head of the Engineer Department, and ordered to the city of Washington. As soon as this new destination was known, a public meeting was called of all the citizens, at which the Governor of the Territory presided. They unanimously voted an Address, with a piece of plate bearing suitable emblems and devices, to be presented by Governor Cass, in the name of the citizens, in approbation of his character as a citizen and an officer: It expressed their sentiments of friendship, applause of his civic virtues, gratitude for his military administration, regret at his departure, and prayers for his future weal. The French Catholic Clergy, headed by the Bishop; the Protestant Clergy; the Ministers of the Gospel of all denominations; the Governor; the Heads of Departments; the Judges of the Courts; the citizens, generally; and the inhabit-

ants of the British side also; all waited on him in a body, in testimony of their respect and kindest wishes for himself, his Lady, and Family, to whom they were all personally endeared. The poor French inhabitants particularly, on either side the strait, were not less anxious to exhibit their remembrance of the protection he had afforded them; of the consideration he evinced for their peculiar situation; of the respect paid to their religion; of his exertions to repair their wrongs, to adjust their rightful claims on the government for their services during the war, and to secure to them their titles to lands on which they had long been settled. Indeed, all classes, without distinction of politics or religion, of profession or occupation, from glowing breasts and eloquent tongues, bade him adieu, with feelings which it was alike honourable in them to entertain, and in him to inspire.

On the 8th of June, 1821, with a heart overflowing toward a people, among whom he had dwelt so long in the reciprocal exercise of the kindliest affections and good offices, he embarked in a steamboat, with his whole Family, consisting of his wife, nine young children, and his mother-in-law. He, also, took on board with him a barge, in which he had traversed the Lakes through their greatest extent. The party, after a pleasant and diversified route by land and water, safely ar-

rived at Georgetown, in the district of Columbia, the 20th of the same month. Macomb immediately entered on his duties, as Chief Engineer.

Mr. Calhoun was, now, Head of the War Department. On assuming its administration, at a single glance he penetrated its recesses, and discerned the defects of its organization; while, with a logical mind, analytical and synthetical, he applied, with pervading energy, his peculiar powers of resolution and combination, to the reformation of the system. Of intuitive perception; keen in investigation; inflexible in purpose; with a penetration, like the lightning's shaft, piercing and rending; with an eagle eye that can look, unblenched, upon the sun; with an eagle spirit that can wing its way on rays of light; it might have been expected that he would impart a fresh impetus to all operations of which he took the direction. Accordingly, the whole department heaved and quickened with the life and intelligence he breathed into it. It is high praise, therefore, to Macomb, that, by the conduct of his own branch of that Department, he gained the marked and often repeated thanks of its Head. In the opinion of Mr. Calhoun, the Engineer Bureau was second, in importance, only to the Chief Command of the Army. The nature of the duties incumbent on it were so important, extensive, and complicated, that to

insure success in its operations required great vigilance, unrelaxing industry, and a practical judgment, for the introduction of those principles of method, which would effectuate an unity and efficiency of action, a just distribution and faithful execution of official tasks, together with economy and accountability in public expenditure. This Bureau embraced, within the scope of its powers and duties, not only the fortifications to be constructed for the defence of our whole seaboard and inland frontiers; the Military Academy; the Topographical explorations, surveys, and drawings; but, also, Internal Improvements by roads and canals, the deepening of Harbours, the creation of artificial Ports, and the removal of obstructions in the navigation of our great Rivers. From the confidence reposed in its plans and estimates for these noble objects, and from the general ability and integrity with which it was conducted by Macomb, Congress felt justified in placing the most liberal appropriations at its disposal. The character of the Engineer Department continued to grow in the public estimation, until it became one of the most important and useful establishments under the Government. The system of operation was so well methodized and defined, and the accountability so secured, that, during Macomb's administration of it, including a period of seven years, out of more than six

millions of dollars appropriated to the objects committed to his charge, *not one cent* was unaccounted for or lost to the people of the United States! This fact, alone, speaks volumes. It is superfluous to say, that such conduct could not fail to receive the high approbation as well of the Head of the War Department and of the Chief Executive, as of the Congress and the Nation.

In the first year of his residence in Georgetown, by a severe dispensation of Providence, he was bereaved of his amiable and excellent Consort, who, in giving birth to a daughter, fell a victim to the causualities of an accouchement. She had been the happy mother of twelve children, of whom three sons and six daughters still live for their father. Ardent in her fidelity, to accompany her husband, she encountered the perils of climate, in the North and in the South, and of travel by land, and sea, and lake. She dared the hazards of war, in camp and garrison; and found a shield from all dangers and sorrows in her husband's arms. She was endowed with an elegant mind, and possessed accomplished manners. Whom her beauty captivated, her intelligence enchained. She adorned the polished circles in which she moved; and, among a numerous acquaintance, had the rare felicity to acquire many true and affectionate friends. Her favourite province was round the domestic hearth, where she presided, mid

every endearment, with the household gods of hospitality, friendship, and love. With a happy tact, she successfully exercised her talent to render her husband's home the abode of the social pleasures and affections, and a delightful resort for the stranger guest, the acquaintance, and the friend.

On her decease, the General sent for his aged father and mother, then residing in New-York, and who had been reduced from affluence to poverty. He received them under his own roof; and subsequently enjoyed the satisfaction, which none but a grateful son can appreciate, of discharging in some degree those obligations, which can never be entirely cancelled, of *filial piety*, by placing them in a situation of comfortable competency.

The events of the late war with Great Britain, and his own observation and experience, had turned the attention of Macomb, strongly, to the subject of our Militia. In a republic, this must ever be the right arm of its defence—the main national reliance. When the people reluct at the necessary expense of time and toil to preserve themselves in a state, though necessarily imperfect, yet still a state of military organization and discipline, the entire Government, for all purposes of national independence, might as well be disbanded at once: we shall have become a nation of Sybarites, already

conquered by our own imbecility: we shall be sold by contract to the highest bidder; and an European detachment be sent over to enforce the terms of sale and take possession, unless anticipated by domestic mercenary troops. Corruption, when luxury has dissolved a people in effeminacy, is the enthanasia of a republic; but even this pitiful privilege cannot be our's: for the country is yet too young to be corrupt, though it is old enough, should the phenomenon of an unarmed nation exist in our instance, to die of debility. There is no succedaneum for a militia, an efficient militia. The only substitute is anarchy, or despotism. To prove the practicability of such a militia, and to point out the best methods of accomplishing so vitally important an object, Macomb composed a most able and elaborate memoir, filled with the results of study, sagacity, and experience,—which has been published among the documents of Congress. His plan proposes to render the Army, Military Academy, and Militia, harmoniously co-operative—to infuse the spirit, tactics, and science, of the Army and Academy, to a certain extent, into the body of the Militia; yet without detracting from the entirety of the Army, or incurring a great national expenditure. Some such measure would be economy as well as efficiency in war, and safety in peace. *It is patriotism. It is national existence.*

The science of war has not been Macomb's only study. He delighted in agriculture. He made many practical experiments on implements of husbandry, and especially tried the properties of the plough, on which subject he made a Report, while in the Engineer Department. Among his contributions to agricultural works, was an Essay, published in the American Farmer, accompanied with plans and drawings, illustrative of the art of building with the composition of Tapia. The varied productions of his pen, his general orders, official reports, agricultural communications, and miscellaneous correspondence, bear the impress of an active, ingenious, strong, and scientific mind. Though, in the pressure of business, his pen may sometimes be hasty, yet all his papers are substantially well written, and many of them with surpassing felicity, which have justly obtained marked public encomium.

In the month of May, 1826, General Macomb married Mrs. Harriet Balch Wilson, a widow lady, daughter of the Reverend Doctor Balch, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, in the District of Columbia. Respect for the sensitive delicacy of her feelings forbids, while living, the eulogy she richly merits; and distant be the day when urn or stone shall speak of her!

On the death of Major General Brown, General in

Chief of the Army, a question arose, as to his successor. Different views were entertained, by the various competitors for the station, in regard to their respective claims and pretensions. Among the higher officers of the army, different constructions were given to the rules of relative rank—some claiming precedence from commissions in the line, others from brevets conferred for gallant and meretorious actions. The unsettled state, in which this question of rank had been left by the Government since the war, might well be expected to prove an apple of discord; for honour, power, and emolument, were in the issue. The Executive viewed the appointment to the chief command of the Army, as a matter of free selection, even beyond the pale of the army. It was thought that this liberty on the part of the Government was approved by principles of public policy, and not interdicted by any provision of the law. Macomb, reluctant to enter the arena of contention for rank and command in time of peace, was assiduously engaged in his duties of Chief Engineer. Yet, in justice to himself, he conceived it a duty to lay before the President, a simple statement of his own claims and pretensions, founded on long and faithful services, on seniority in his rank of Brigadier, and on the faith of Government which had been formerly pledged to him by the Executive, that his right of pro-

motion should not be infringed by his arrangement to the Engineer Department. From the position which Macomb occupied, as Head of that Department, he had not, since he quitted his command on the Canadian frontier, been before the public eye, in the capacity of a military commander; but was rather regarded as a labourer for the public benefit in the occupations of peace—in preparing the country for a state of war—in fortifying our seaboard—in superintending the education of the adopted sons of the republic at the Military Academy—in facilitating intercourse between the several States, by good roads and canals—in improving the navigation of our principal rivers—in a word, in devoting his whole mind and time to strengthen the union, to render the nation prosperous in peace, and in war invincible. The President, after weighing the various titles to the vacated post, decided in favour of Macomb, and nominated him accordingly to the Senate. That august body confirmed the nomination by a great majority; and Alexander Macomb became General in Chief of the American Army. Disputes of precedence, it is to be hoped, will no more disturb the harmony of the service. Our present Chief Magistrate, with characteristic promptitude, as soon as the question was presented to his view, confirmed the decision of the learned Adams, and destroyed every germ of future contention. Highly ho-

nourable to Macomb is such a testimony from him, whose claim to the title of *The Great Captain of the Age* has been vindicated by the crowning victory of New-Orleans, when the unanimous acclaim of a grateful nation awarded him the verdant palm, which envy cannot blanch, nor detraction tear away. Years will feed its verdure, until the name of Orleans be erased from the historic tablet, and the Father of Rivers cease to flow.

While Major General Macomb has resided at the seat of the National Government, in the command of the Army, it is not too much to say, that, by his conciliatory deportment, by his exemplary morals, by his tact and talent, and energetic discharge of his functions, by his familiar acquaintance with all the details of service and with the duties of every post and corps, he has raised yet higher the reputation of the Army, diffused still more widely a spirit of emulation, promoted concord, and increased the efficiency of every arm. Fortunately, too, he has been favoured with the co-operation of able auxiliaries in his military administration. It is the peculiarity of great men to attach men, of similar character, to their person or service. If a chief be austere of disposition, repulsive of manners, degraded by ignorance, or debased by vice, those whose souls are of a lofty mould fly to distant stations—they instinctively shun contact with one

whom power cannot dignify, nor virtue adorn, nor rank elevate ; but around him who, by mind, manners, and disposition, as well as by official authority, can operate, as a centre of attraction, a focus of intelligence, kindred spirits love to cluster. Macomb is surrounded by a military cabinet of distinguished ability—a Staff which would honour any European service. Of some of these individuals, the writer may be permitted to speak from personal knowledge.

Adjutant General Jones, formerly a Captain in Macomb's Artillery, is, as his present title imports, the immediate representative of his General in Chief—the Head of the General Staff. He is " every inch" a soldier. Like the war-horse, he loves the music of war ; and is most delighted, when careering on the battle-field, winning, as he has often won, the medals of valour, from the vanquished prowess of the foe, and the applauding gratitude of his country. He is now, in Peace, assiduously employing all his powers of mind and body in the comprehensive duties of his Bureau, which embrace, at the same time, the minutest detail and the entire economy of the Army—honouring, as he is honoured by, the Profession he serves.

At the Head of the Ordnance Department stands Colonel Bomford—an original genius and a scientific scholar, in the broadest and highest import of those

terms—devoting, with patriotic disinterestedness, those talents and that science to the military service, which he is bound, by even a higher duty, to dedicate to the service of mankind: He is *the rare ornament of an age*—at once profound and practical—uniting, to almost juvenile simplicity of manners, the maturest wisdom of philosophy.

Over the Quarter Master General's Department presides General Jesup, whose life is an unbroken series of heroic and successful exertions in war and peace. After disbursing millions of the public treasure for works of national defence, he is probably as poor, and certainly as pure, as Curius; yet all his personal virtues and pre-eminent public services are unfortunately obscured by a pervading fault, which his enemies, if there be such, would call reserve, but which his friends denominate modesty. He would not lift his finger or wink his eye, to secure the brightest blazonry to his merits: He goes to no office of heraldry for his escutcheon: He asks no coronet for his coat-of-arms: He has acted *for* his country, and *before* his country; and, if interrogated, might meekly, but with a noble pride, point to that country's archives.

In reviewing this biographical sketch of Major General Macomb, it is singular and gratifying to see him mounting, in regular progression, from the lowest to

the highest point of his Profession—no halting—no retrogradation—his march ever forward on an ascending plane. During an uninterrupted service for a period of more than thirty-three years, in every variety of station, employment, and circumstance, surrounded too by officers who were straining in the same race of competition, the most generous natures sometimes forgetting the spirit of the soldier in the natural emotions of jealousy, that Macomb should have escaped a single arrest or serious embarrasment, is of itself a peculiar fortune. We behold him, while yet a boy, the protege of Hamilton, on his recommendation commissioned by Washington, a Cornet of Dragoons—we view him, while still a youth, the associate and friend as well as pupil of North and Williams, and Davie and Pinckney—we see him attracting the attention and winning the applause of Jefferson, enjoying the confidence and support of every successive President and Secretary of War, and especially honoured by the friendship of such men as Armstrong, Crawford, and Calhoun, who, however contrariant in their creeds and characters, must be acknowledged to possess the faculty of discrimination. And we now contemplate him, after so long a tour of faithful, conspicuous, and successful services, at the Head of the Army of the American Republic !

There is a novelty about the scenes and incidents

of Macomb's life that grapples attention, and carries the reader along with them. To impart to them their true charm, to invest them with a halo of romantic resplendence, throw them, in imagination, one thousand years back—then say, as the truth of his biography will warrant us in saying, that a stripling of the wilderness (for at the time of Macomb's birth, Detroit was a part of our western wilds,) emerging from the forests, and passing victoriously, for many years, through appointed trials and labours of no ordinary occurrence, magnitude, and difficulty, rushed forward, and, not by the mere exertion of the brute force of an overwhelming army, but by the display of the loftiest virtues and controlling powers, and by the united voices of his countrymen, seated himself, amid illustrious competitors, in the chief command of the military forces of his country! This is the point of view in which TIME will place the picture of Macomb: This is the light in which Posterity will look back upon it. What, in comparison, are the *ferocious* exploits of the boasted demigods of antiquity, which excite our school-boy wonder and admiration? The wars they waged on the side of cruelty and violence, oppression and despotism, Macomb waged on the side of virtue and humanity, of liberty and law, his country's soil, and his country's institutions.

The traits of General Macomb's military character are sufficiently developed and illustrated by his professional career. Almost cradled in the camp—with his maturer years ripened in field and fortress—familiar with the details of service—instructed in the manœuvres of battle—competent to the comprehensive combinations of a campaign—master of all the enginery of war—with tried valour and experienced talent—and crowned with success in the most signal exploits—he may well be esteemed an ornament of his profession, not more elevated by rank than merit; but rather as one whose merit elevates his rank, and confers dignity on office. A distinctive feature of his military character is the respectful disposition manifested by him, wherever stationed, to the civil administration. No functionary or citizen can ever have complained that Macomb infracted his rights, or impaired his interests; or indeed that he failed to exert his every faculty for the promotion of the general weal and individual happiness, for the support of law, defence of justice, and protection of innocence. In our country the sword is as much the emblem of justice, as the weapon of defence; and, while the soldier equally participates in the benefits of the Law, he also shares equally in the disastrous effects of its prostration.

In his person, General Macomb is above the ordinary

height, being five feet, nine and a half inches—finely proportioned—with a round swelling chest—having a very pleasant, and yet dignified presence. His face has the oval contour—with a lofty forehead—a mild blue eye, radiating with mind and benevolence—and a mouth and chin indicative of great decision and firmness. The fault of his countenance is an air of youthfulness, which, should he live, he will probably rectify! Often, on an introduction to strangers, he has been asked, if he was the *Son of the old* General. He is alert in his motions, and buoyant in his spirits which are uniformly in a genial flow. The secret of this fine health lies in an originally good constitution, confirmed by early toil, fatigue, and hardy exercise; and since preserved by a temperance, which never admits the use of alcoholic stimulus.

The manners of Macomb, entirely free and natural, are yet elegant and polished, as might be expected of a soldier bred in courts and camps; but they are, also, in a peculiar manner, ingratiating. You feel, from the impression they make on you, the goodness of his heart; and, when you catch his countenance, you find the impression confirmed. His conversation, too, though marked with his characteristic good sense and sound learning, is, like his manners, full of vivacity and fire. It will sometimes burst out into bold, original concep-

tions, suggested at the moment, and strongly presented; but it generally flows on, like a clear, sparkling stream —full of wit, and humour, and an inexhaustible fund of anecdote.

In both the manners and conversation of Macomb the maternal blood seems to predominate; and yet, to hit the true composition of his character, with the external animation and literary penchant of the French model, should be blended and softened a certain ardency of temperament, a cordial enthusiasm, of the Irish. The dignity which Macomb possesses, is in substance, not in form. That artificial dignity which stands upon stilts, which depends upon staid looks, formalities, and a cold, haughty reserve, he whistles to the winds; or gives it, as crutches are given, to the feeble. For himself, he fears no exposure—is not afraid to be known—relies upon himself—is as willing to meet the rencounter of minds, as of arms—and feels no necessity of ensconcing behind the palisades and entrenchments of etiquette. Advantage might, sometimes, be taken of this freedom and openness, were it not for the natural guards of his shrewdness and penetration of character. Superficial judges, who think *gravity* (notwithstanding it is proverbially a cover-fool) synonymous with weight of character and solidity of judgment, draw unfavourable conclusions, as to his stability; because they

cannot understand the depth of his reasoning, nor perceive the brilliancy of his wit, though they *can* see, with their *bodily* eyes, that he is cheerful and sprightly.

As a man, he is not less amiable and estimable, than, as a public officer, illustrious. The private and social relations of life are hallowed in his example. In the various capacities of husband and son, father, friend, and citizen, he practically exhibits the virtues which adorn them. With the kindest sympathy, he mingles in the sorrows of the afflicted; or, with cordial congratulation, rejoices with the fortunate and happy.

Clear and quick in his perceptions—abundant in resources—fertile and ingenious in speculation—prompt, bold, persevering, and powerful in action—with an heroic daring which danger but stimulates, sustained by a constancy of nerve and will which obstacles but confirm—who, in a trying exigency of our national existence, fearlessly assumed a most perilous responsibility, and, under Providence, by the exertion of transcendant capacity, saved his country from the devastation of protracted war—with a philanthropy which knows no personal enemy, and deserves none—with a generosity limited only by his means—with an humanity alike conspicuous on the battle-plain when victory is won, and in the circles of private life—with a proud frankness which wears no disguise, and spurns the meanness of

dissimulation—and,—a pre-eminent praise,—ardent and faithful in his friendships—our respect and love, admiration and gratitude, must ever attach to the character of ALEXANDER MACOMB.

THE END.

At the request of the Publishers, the Author has it in contemplation soon to issue an octavo edition, in which the principal passages of this biography will be illustrated by documents, either interwoven in the text, or annexed as an appendix—together with detailed descriptions of actions merely glanced at in this edition.

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